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IRAGE OF THE GEND'ARME AT THE SUPPOSED ESCAPE OF PETER AND O'BRIEN.

Published by Francis & John, Cornhill Street.

PETER SIMPLE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"NEWTON FOSTER," "THE KING'S OWN," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

Illustrated Edition.

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PETER SIMPLE.

CHAPTER I.

O'Brien receives his commission as Lieutenant, and then we take French leave of Givet.

IF I doubted the practicability of escape when I examined the exterior, when we were ushered into the interior of the fortress, I felt that it was impossible, and I stated my opinion to O'Brien. We were conducted into a yard surrounded by a high wall; the buildings appropriated for the prisoners were built with *lean-to* roofs on one side, and at each side of the square was a sentry looking down upon us. It was very much like the dens which they now build for bears, only

so much larger. O'Brien answered me with a "Pish! Peter, it's the very security of the place which will enable us to get out of it. But don't talk, as there are always spies about who understand English."

We were shown into a room allotted to six of us; our baggage was examined, and then delivered over to us. "Better and better, Peter," observed O'Brien, "they've not found it out!"

"What?" inquired I.

"Oh, only a little selection of articles, which might be useful to us by-and-bye."

He then showed me what I never before was aware of: that he had a false bottom to his trunk; but it was papered over like the rest, and very ingeniously concealed. "And what is there, O'Brien?" inquired I.

"Never mind; I had them made at Montpelier. You'll see, by-and-bye."

The others, who were lodged in the same room, then came in, and, after staying a quarter of an hour, went away at the sound of the dinner-bell. "Now, Peter," said O'Brien, "I must get rid of my load. Turn the key."

O'Brien then undressed himself, and when he threw off his shirt and drawers, showed me a rope of silk, with a knot at every two feet, about

half an inch in size, wound round and round his body. There were about sixty feet of it altogether. As I unwound it, he, turning round and round, observed, "Peter, I've worn this rope ever since I left Montpelier, and you've no idea of the pain I have suffered; but we must go to England, that's decided upon."

When I looked at O'Brien, as the rope was wound off, I could easily imagine that he had really been in great pain; in several places his flesh was quite raw from the continual friction, and after it was all unwound, and he had put on his clothes, he fainted away. I was very much alarmed, but I recollected to put the rope into the trunk, and take out the key, before I called for assistance. He soon came to, and on being asked what was the matter, said that he was subject to fits from his infancy. He looked earnestly at me, and I showed him the key, which was sufficient.

For some days O'Brien, who really was not very well, kept to his room. During this time, he often examined the map given him by the gend'arme. One day he said to me, "Peter, can you swim?"

"No," replied I; "but never mind that."

“ But I must mind it, Peter; for observe, we shall have to cross the river Meuse, and boats are not always to be had. You observe, that this fortress is washed by the river on one side: and as it is the strongest side, it is the least guarded—we must escape by it. I can see my way clear enough till we get to the second rampart on the river, but when we drop into the river, if you cannot swim, I must contrive to hold you up, somehow or another.”

“ Are you then determined to escape, O’Brien? I cannot perceive how we are even to get up this wall, with four sentries staring us in the face.”

“ Never do you mind that, Peter, mind your own business; and first tell me, do you intend to try your luck with me?”

“ Yes,” replied I, “ most certainly; if you have sufficient confidence in me to take me as your companion.”

“ To tell you the truth, Peter, I would not give a farthing to escape without you. We were taken together, and, please God, we’ll take ourselves off together; but that must not be for this month; our greatest help will be the dark nights and foul weather.”

The prison was by all accounts very different

from Verdun and some others. We had no parole, and but little communication with the townspeople. Some were permitted to come in and supply us with various articles; but their baskets were searched, to see that they contained nothing that might lead to an escape on the part of the prisoners. Without the precautions that O'Brien had taken, any attempt would have been useless. Still, O'Brien, as soon as he left his room, did obtain several little articles—especially balls of twine—for one of the amusements of the prisoners was flying kites. This, however, was put a stop to, in consequence of one of the strings, whether purposely or not, I cannot say, catching the lock of the musket carried by one of the sentries who looked down upon us, and twitching it out of his hand; after which an order was given by the commandant for no kites to be permitted. This was fortunate for us, as O'Brien, by degrees, purchased all the twine belonging to the other prisoners; and, as we were more than three hundred in number, it amounted to sufficient to enable him, by stealth, to lay it up into very strong cord, or rather, into a sort of square plait, known only to sailors. “Now, Peter,” said he one day,

"I want nothing more than an umbrella for you."

"Why an umbrella for me?"

"To keep you from being drowned with too much water, that's all."

"Rain won't drown me."

"No, no, Peter; but buy a new one as soon as you can."

I did so. O'Brien boiled up a quantity of bees'-wax and oil, and gave it several coats of this preparation. He then put it carefully away in the ticking of his bed. I asked him whether he intended to make known his plan to any of the other prisoners; he replied in the negative, saying, that there were so many of them who could not be trusted, that he would trust no one. We had been now about two months in Givet, when a Steel's List was sent to a lieutenant, who was confined there. The lieutenant came up to O'Brien, and asked him his christian name. "Terence, to be sure," replied O'Brien.

"Then," answered the lieutenant, "I may congratulate you on your promotion, for here you are upon the list of August."

"Sure there must be some trifling mistake;

let me look at it. Terence O'Brien, sure enough; but now the question is, has any other fellow robbed me of my name and promotion at the same time? Bother, what can it mane? I won't belave it—not a word of it. I've no more interest than a dog who drags cat's meat."

"Really, O'Brien," observed I, "I cannot see why you should not be made; I am sure you deserve your promotion for your conduct when you were taken prisoner."

"And what did I do then, you simple Peter, but put you on my back as the men do their hammocks when they are piped down? but, barring all claim, how could any one know what took place in the battery, except you, and I, and the armourer, who lay dead? So explain that, Peter, if you can."

"I think I can," replied I, after the lieutenant had left us; and I then told O'Brien how I had written to Captain Savage, and had had the fact attested by the major who had made us prisoners.

"Well, Peter," said O'Brien, after a pause, "there is a fable about a lion and a mouse. If, by your means, I have obtained my promotion, why, then the mouse is a finer baste than the

lion; but instead of being happy, I shall now be miserable until the truth is ascertained one way or the other, and that's another reason why I must set off to England as fast as I can."

For a few days after this O'Brien was very uneasy, but fortunately letters arrived by that time; one to me from my father, in which he requested me to draw for whatever money I might require, saying that the whole family would retrench in every way to give me all the comfort which might be obtained in my unfortunate situation. I wept at his kindness, and more than ever longed to throw myself in his arms, and thank him. He also told me that my uncle William was dead, and that there was only one between him and the title, but that my grandfather was in good health, and had been very kind to him lately. My mother was much afflicted at my having been made a prisoner, and requested I would write as often as I could. O'Brien's letter was from Captain Savage; the frigate had been sent home with despatches, and O'Brien's conduct represented to the Admiralty, which had, in consequence, promoted him to the rank of lieutenant. O'Brien came to me with the letter, his countenance radiant with joy as

he put it into my hands. In return I put mine into his, and he read it over.

“ Peter, my boy, I’m under great obligations to you. When you were wounded and feverish, you thought of me at a time when you had quite enough to think of yourself; but I never thank in words. I see your uncle William is dead. How many more uncles have you ?”

“ My uncle John, who is married, and has already two daughters.”

“ Blessings on him ; may he stick to the female line of business ! Peter, my boy, you shall be a lord before you die.”

“ Nonsense, O’Brien ; I have no chance. Don’t put such foolish ideas in my head.”

“ What chance had I of being a lieutenant, and am I not one ? Well, Peter, you’ve helped to make a lieutenant of me, but I’ll make a *man* of you, and that’s better. Peter, I perceive, with all your simplicity, that you’re not over and above simple, and that, with all your asking for advice, you can think and act for yourself on an emergency. Now, Peter, these are talents that must not be thrown away in this cursed hole, and therefore, my boy, prepare yourself to quit this place in a week, wind and weather permitting—that is to say, not fair wind and

weather, but the fouler the better. Will you be ready at any hour of any night that I call you up?"

"Yes, O'Brien, I will, and do my best."

"No man can do much more, that ever I heard of. But, Peter, do me one favour; as I really am a lieutenant, just touch your hat to me only once, that's all: but I wish the compliment, just to see how it looks."

"Lieutenant O'Brien," said I, touching my hat, "have you any further orders?"

"Yes, sir," replied he; "that you never presume to touch your hat to me again, unless we sail together, and then that's a different sort of thing."

About a week afterwards, O'Brien came to me, and said, "The new moon's quartered in with foul weather; if it holds, prepare for a start. I have put what is necessary in your little haversack; it may be to-night. Go to bed now, and sleep for a week if you can, for you'll get but little sleep, if we succeed, for the week to come."

This was about eight o'clock. I went to bed, and about twelve I was roused by O'Brien, who told me to dress myself carefully, and come down to him in the yard. I did so without dis-

turbing any body, and found the night as dark as pitch, (it was then November,) and raining in torrents; the wind was high, howling round the yard, and sweeping in the rain in every direction as it eddyed to and fro. It was some time before I could find O'Brien, who was hard at work; and, as I had already been made acquainted with all his plans, I will now explain them. At Montpelier he had procured six large pieces of iron, about eighteen inches long, with a gimblet at one end of each, and a square at the other, which fitted to a handle which unshipped. For precaution he had a spare handle, but each handle fitted to all the irons. O'Brien had screwed one of these pieces of iron between the interstices of the stones of which the wall was built, and sitting astride on that, was fixing another about three feet above. When he had accomplished this, he stood upon the lower iron, and supporting himself by the second, which about met his hip, he screwed in a third, always fixing them about six inches on one side of the other, and not one above the other. When he had screwed in his six irons, he was about half up the wall, and then he fastened his rope, which he had carried round his neck, to the upper iron, and lowering him-

self down, unscrewed the four lower irons; then ascending by the rope, he stood upon the fifth iron, and, supporting himself by the upper iron, recommenced his task. By these means he arrived in the course of an hour and a half to the top of the wall, where he fixed his last iron, and making his rope fast, he came down again. "Now, Peter," said he, "there is no fear of the sentries seeing us; if they had the eyes of cats, they could not until we are on the top of the wall; but then we arrive at the glacis, and we must creep to the ramparts on our bellies. I am going up with all the materials. Give me your haversack—you will go up lighter; and recollect, should any accident happen to me, you run to bed again. If, on the contrary, I pull the rope up and down three or four times, you may sheer up it as fast as you can." O'Brien then loaded himself with the other rope, the two knapsacks, iron crows, and other implements he had procured; and, last of all, with the umbrella. "Peter, if the rope bears me with all this, it is clear it will bear such a creature as you are, therefore don't be afraid." So whispering, he commenced his ascent; in about three minutes he was up, and the rope pulled. I immediately followed him, and found the rope

very easy to climb, from the knots at every two feet, which gave me a hold for my feet, and I was up in as short a time as he was. He caught me by the collar, putting his wet hand on my mouth, and I lay down beside him while he pulled up the rope. We then crawled on our stomachs across the glacia till we arrived at the rampart. The wind blew tremendously, and the rain pattered down so fast, that the sentries did not perceive us; indeed, it was no fault of theirs, for it was impossible to have made us out. It was some time before O'Brien could find out the point exactly above the drawbridge of the first ditch; at last he did—he fixed his crow-bar in, and lowered down the rope. “Now, Peter, I had better go first again; when I shake the rope from below, all's right.” O'Brien descended, and in a few minutes the rope again shook; I followed him, and found myself received in his arms upon the meeting of the drawbridge; but the drawbridge itself was up. O'Brien led the way across the chains, and I followed him. When we had crossed the moat, we found a barrier-gate locked; this puzzled us. O'Brien pulled out his picklocks to pick it, but without success; here we were fast. “We must undermine the

gate, O'Brien; we must pull up the pavement until we can creep under." "Peter, you are a fine fellow; I never thought of that." We worked very hard until the hole was large enough, using the crow-bar which was left, and a little wrench which O'Brien had with him. By these means we got under the gate in the course of an hour or more. This gate led to the lower rampart, but we had a covered way to pass through before we arrived at it. We proceeded very cautiously, when we heard a noise: we stopped, and found that it was a sentry, who was fast asleep, and snoring. Little expecting to find one here, we were puzzled; pass him we could not well, as he was stationed on the very spot where we required to place our crow-bar to descend the lower rampart into the river. O'Brien thought for a moment. "Peter," said he, "now is the time for you to prove yourself a man. He is fast asleep, but his noise must be stopped. I will stop his mouth, but at the very moment that I do so you must throw open the pan of his musket, and then he cannot fire it." "I will, O'Brien; don't fear me." We crept cautiously up to him, and O'Brien motioning to me to put my thumb upon the pan, I did so, and the moment that O'Brien put his hand

upon the soldier's mouth, I threw open the pan. The fellow struggled, and snapped his lock as a signal, but of course without discharging his musket, and in a minute he was not only gagged but bound by O'Brien, with my assistance. Leaving him there, we proceeded to the rampart, and fixing the crow-bar again, O'Brien descended; I followed him, and found him in the river, hanging on to the rope; the umbrella was opened and turned upwards; the preparation made it resist the water, and, as previously explained to me by O'Brien, I had only to hold on at arm's length to two beckets which he had affixed to the point of the umbrella, which was under water. To the same part O'Brien had a tow-line, which taking in his teeth, he towed me down with the stream to about a hundred yards clear of the fortress, where we landed. O'Brien was so exhausted that for a few minutes he remained quite motionless; I also was benumbed with the cold. "Peter," said he "thank God we have succeeded so far; now must we push on as far as we can, for we shall have daylight in two hours."

O'Brien took out his flask of spirits, and we both drank a half tumbler at least, but we

should not, in our state, have been affected with a bottle. We now walked along the river-side till we fell in with a small craft, with a boat towing astern: O'Brien swam to it, and cutting the painter without getting in, towed it on shore. The oars were fortunately in the boat. I got in, we shoved off, and rowed away down the stream till the dawn of day. "All's right, Peter; now we'll land. This is the Forest of Ardennes." We landed, replaced the oars in the boat and pushed her off into the stream, to induce people to suppose that she had broken adrift, and then hastened into the thickest of the wood. It still rained hard; I shivered, and my teeth chattered with the cold, but there was no help for it. We again took a dram of spirits, and, worn out with fatigue and excitement, soon fell fast asleep upon a bed of leaves which we had collected together.

CHAPTER II.

Grave consequences of gravitation—O'Brien enlists himself as a gend'arme, and takes charge of me—We are discovered, and obliged to run for it—The pleasures of a winter bivouac.

It was not until noon that I awoke, when I found that O'Brien had covered me more than a foot deep with leaves to protect me from the weather. I felt quite warm and comfortable; my clothes had dried on me, but without giving me cold. "How very kind of you, O'Brien!" said I.

"Not a bit, Peter: you have hard work to go through yet, and I must take care of you. You're but a bud, and I'm a full-blown rose." So saying, he put the spirit-flask to his mouth, and then handed it to me. "Now, Peter, we must make a start, for depend upon it, they

will scour the country for us; but this is a large wood, and they may as well attempt to find a needle in a bundle of hay, if we once get into the heart of it."

"I think," said I, "that this forest is mentioned by Shakspeare, in one of his plays."

"Very likely, Peter," replied O'Brien: "but we are at no play-work now; and what reads amazing prettily, is no joke in reality. I've often observed, that your writers never take the weather into consideration."

"I beg your pardon, O'Brien; in King Lear the weather was tremendous."

"Very likely; but who was the king that went out in such weather?"

"Kind Lear did, when he was mad."

"So he was, that's certain, Peter; but runaway prisoners have some excuse; so now for a start."

We set off, forcing our way through the thicket, for about three hours, O'Brien looking occasionally at his pocket compass; it then was again nearly dark, and O'Brien proposed a halt. We made up a bed of leaves for the night, and slept much more comfortably than we had the night before. All our bread was wet, but as we had no water, it was rather a

relief; the meat we had with us was sufficient for a week. Once more we laid down and fell fast asleep. About five o'clock in the morning I was roused by O'Brien, who at the same time put his hand gently over my mouth. I sat up, and perceived a large fire not far from us. "The Philistines are upon us, Peter," said he; "I have reconnoitred, and they are the gend'armes. I am fearful of going away, as we may stumble upon some more of them. I've been thinking what's best before I waked you; and it appears to me, that we had better get up the tree, and lie there."

At that time we were hidden in a copse of underwood, with a large oak in the centre, covered with ivy. "I think so too, O'Brien; shall we go up now, or wait a little?"

"Now, to be sure, that they're eating their prog. Mount you, Peter, and I'll help you."

O'Brien shoved me up the tree, and then waiting a little while to bury our haversacks among the leaves, he followed me. He desired me to remain in a very snug position, on the first fork of the tree, while he took another, amongst a bunch of ivy, on the largest bough. There we remained for about an hour, when day dawned. We observed the gend'armes

mustered at the break of day, by the corporal, and then they all separated in different directions to scour the wood. We were delighted to perceive this, as we hoped soon to be able to get away; but there was one gend'arme who remained. He walked to and fro, looking everywhere, until he came directly under the tree in which we were concealed. He poked about, until at last he came to the bed of leaves upon which we had slept; these he turned over and over with his bayonet, until he routed out our haversacks. "Pardi!" exclaimed he, "where the nest and eggs are, the birds are near." He then walked round the tree, looking up into every part, but we were well concealed, and he did not discover us for some time. At last he saw me, and ordered me to come down. I paid no attention to him, as I had no signal from O'Brien. He walked round a little farther until he was directly under the branch on which O'Brien lay. Taking up this position, he had a fairer aim at me, and levelled his musket, saying, "*Descendez, ou je tire.*" Still I continued immovable, for I knew not what to do. I shut my eyes, however; the musket shortly afterwards was discharged, and whether from fear or not

I can hardly tell, I lost my hold of a sudden, and down I came. I was stunned with the fall, and thought that I must have been wounded, and was very much surprised, when, instead of the gend'arme, O'Brien came up to me, and asked whether I was hurt. I answered I believed not, and got upon my legs, when I found the gend'arme lying on the ground, breathing heavily, but insensible. When O'Brien perceived the gend'arme level his musket at me, he immediately dropped from the bough, right upon his head; this occasioned the musket to go off, without hitting me, and at the same time, the weight of O'Brien's body from such a height, killed the gend'arme, for he expired before we left him. "Now, Peter," said O'Brien, "this is the most fortunate thing in the world, and will take us half through the country; but we have no time to lose." He then stripped the gend'arme, who still breathed heavily, and dragging him to our bed of leaves, covered him up, threw off his own clothes, which he tied up in a bundle, and gave to me to carry, and put on those of the gend'arme. I could not help laughing at the metamorphosis, and asked O'Brien what he intended. "Sure, I'm a

gend'arme bringing with me a prisoner, who has escaped." He then tied my hands with a cord, shouldered his musket, and off we set. We now quitted the wood as soon as we could, for O'Brien said that he had no fear for the next ten days; and so it proved. We had one difficulty, which was, that we were going the wrong way; but that was obviated by travelling mostly at night, when no questions were asked, except at the cabarets where we lodged, and they did not know which way we came. When we stopped at night, my youth excited a great deal of commiseration, especially from the females; and in one instance I was offered assistance to escape. I consented to it, but at the same time informed O'Brien of the plan proposed. O'Brien kept watch—I dressed myself, and was at the open window, when he rushed in, seizing me, and declaring that he would inform the government of the conduct of the parties. Their confusion and distress was very great. They offered O'Brien twenty, thirty, forty, Napoleons, if he would hush it up, for they were aware of the penalty and imprisonment. O'Brien replied that he would not accept of any money in compromise of his duty, that after he had given me into the

charge of the gend'arme of the next post, his business was at an end, and he must return to Flushing, where he was stationed.

"I have a sister there," replied the hostess, "who keeps an inn. You'll want good quarters, and a friendly cup; do not denounce us, and I'll give you a letter to her, which, if it does not prove of service, you can then return and give the information."

O'Brien consented; the letter was delivered, and read to him, in which the sister was requested, by the love she bore to the writer, to do all she could for the bearer, who had the power of making the whole family miserable, but had refused so to do. O'Brien pocketed the letter, filled his brandy-flask, and saluting all the women, left the cabaret, dragging me after him with a cord. The only difference, as O'Brien observed after he went out, was, that he (O'Brien) kissed all the women, and the women all kissed me. In this way, we had proceeded by Charleroy and Louvain, and were within a few miles of Malines, when a circumstance occurred which embarrassed us not a little. We were following our route, avoiding Malines, which was a fortified town, and at the time were in a narrow lane, with wide ditches,

full of water, on each side. At the turning of a sharp corner we met the gend'arme who had supplied O'Brien with a map of the town of Givet. "Good morning, comrade," said he to O'Brien, looking earnestly at him, "whom have we here?"

"A young Englishman, whom I picked up close by, escaped from prison."

"Where from?"

"He will not say; but I suspect from Givet."

"There are two who have escaped from Givet," replied he; "how they escaped no one can imagine; but," continued he, again looking at O'Brien, "*avec les braves, il n'y a rien d'impossible.*"

"That is true," replied O'Brien; "I have taken one, the other cannot be far off. You had better look for him."

"I should like to find him," replied the gend'arme, "for you know that to retake a runaway prisoner is certain promotion. You will be made a corpōral."

"So much the better," replied O'Brien; "*adieu, mon ami.*"

"Nay, I merely came for a walk, and will return with you to Malines, where of course you are bound."

"We shall not get there to-night," said O'Brien, "my prisoner is too much fatigued."

"Well, then, we will go as far as we can; and I will assist you. Perhaps we may find the second, who, I understand, obtained a map of the fortress by some means or another."

We at once perceived that we were discovered; he afterwards told us that the body of a gend'arme had been found in the wood, no doubt murdered by the prisoners, and that the body was stripped naked. "I wonder," continued he, "whether one of the prisoners put on his clothes, and passed as a gend'arme."

"Peter," said O'Brien, "are we to murder this man or not?"

"I should say not; pretend to trust him, and then we may give him the slip." This was said during the time that the gend'arme stopped a moment behind us.

"Well, we'll try; but first I'll put him off his guard." When the gend'arme came up with us, O'Brien observed, that the English prisoners were very liberal; that he knew that a hundred Napoleons were often paid for assistance, and he thought that no corporal's rank was equal to a sum that would in France make a man happy and independent for life.

“Very true,” replied the gend’arme; “and let me only look upon that sum, and I will guarantee a positive safety out of France.”

“Then we understand each other,” replied O’Brien; “this boy will give two hundred—one half shall be yours, if you will assist.”

“I will think of it,” replied the gend’arme, who then talked about indifferent subjects, until we arrived at a small town called Acarchot, where we proceeded to a cabaret. The usual curiosity passed over, we were left alone, O’Brien telling the gend’arme that he would expect his reply that night or to-morrow morning. The gend’arme said, to-morrow morning. O’Brien requesting him to take charge of me, he called the woman of the cabaret, to show him a room; she showed him one or two, which he refused, as not sufficiently safe for the prisoner. The woman laughed at the idea, observing, “what had he to fear from a *pauvre enfant* like me?”

“Yet this *pauvre enfant* escaped from Givet,” replied O’Brien. “These Englishmen are devils from their birth.” The last room showed to O’Brien suited him, and he chose it—the woman not presuming to contradict a gend’arme. As soon as they came down again, O’Brien

ordered me to bed, and went up stairs with me. He bolted the door, and pulling me to the large chimney, we put our heads up, and whispered, that our conversation should not be heard. "This man is not to be trusted," said O'Brien, "and we must give him the slip. I know my way out of the inn, and we must return the way we came, and then strike off in another direction."

"But will he permit us?"

"Not if he can help it; but I shall soon find out his manœuvres."

O'Brien then went and stopped the key-hole, by hanging his handkerchief across it, and stripping himself of his gend'arme uniform, put on his own clothes; then stuffed the blankets and pillow into the gend'arme's dress, and laid it down on the outside of the bed, as if it were a man sleeping in his clothes—indeed it was an admirable deception. He laid his musket by the side of the image, and then did the same to my bed, making it appear as if there was a person asleep in it, of my size, and putting my cap on the pillow. "Now, Peter, we'll see if he is watching us. He will wait till he thinks we are asleep." The light still remained in the

room, and about an hour afterwards we heard a noise of one treading on the stairs, upon which, as agreed, we crept under the bed. The latch of our door was tried, and finding it open, which he did not expect, the gend'arme entered, and looking at both beds went away. "Now," said I, after the gend'arme had gone down stairs, "O'Brien, ought we not to escape?"

"I've been thinking of it, Peter, and I have come to a resolution that we can manage it better. He is certain to come again in an hour or two. It is only eleven. Now, I'll play him a trick." O'Brien then took one of the blankets, made it fast to the window, which he left wide open, and at the same time disarranged the images he had made up, so as to let the gend'arme perceive that they were counterfeit. We again crept under the bed, and, as O'Brien foretold, in about an hour more the gend'arme returned; our lamp was still burning, but he had a light of his own. He looked at the beds, perceived at once that he had been duped, went to the open window, and then exclaimed, "*Sacre Dieu! ils m'ont échappés et je ne suis plus corporal. F—tre!*"

à la chasse !" He rushed out of the room, and in a few minutes afterwards, we heard him open the street door, and go away.

"That will do, Peter," said O'Brien, laughing; "now we'll be off also, although there's no great hurry." O'Brien then resumed his dress of a gend'arme, and about an hour afterwards we went down, and wishing the hostess all happiness, quitted the cabaret, returning the same road by which we had come. "Now, Peter," said O'Brien, "we're in a bit of a puzzle. This dress won't do any more, still there's a respectability about it, which will not allow me to put it off till the last moment." We walked on till day-light, when we hid ourselves in a copse of trees. At night we again started for the forest of Ardennes, for O'Brien said our best chance was to return, until they supposed that we had had time to effect our escape; but we never reached the forest, for on the next day a violent snow-storm came on: it continued without intermission for four days, during which we suffered much. Our money was not exhausted, as I had drawn upon my father for £60, which, with the disadvantageous exchange, had given me fifty Napoleons. Occasionally O'Brien crept into a cabaret, and obtained pro-

visions ; but, as we dare not be seen together as before, we were always obliged to sleep in the open air, the ground being covered more than three feet with snow. On the fifth day, being then six days from the forest of Ardennes, we hid ourselves in a small wood, about a quarter of a mile from the road. I remained there, while O'Brien, as a *gend'arme*, went to obtain provisions. As usual, I looked out for the best shelter during his absence, and what was my horror at falling in with a man and woman, who lay dead in the snow, having evidently perished from the inclemency of the weather. Just as I discovered them, O'Brien returned, and I told him : he went with me to view the bodies. They were dressed in a strange attire, ribbons pinned upon their clothes, and two pairs of very high stilts lying by their sides. O'Brien surveyed them, and then said, " Peter, this is the very best thing that could have happened to us. We may now walk through France without soiling our feet with the cursed country."

" How do you mean ?" replied I.

" I mean," said he, " that these are the people that we met near Montpelier, who came from the Landes, walking about on their stilts for the

amusement of others, to obtain money. In their own country they are obliged to walk so. Now, Peter, it appears to me that the man's clothes will fit me, and the girl's (poor creature, how pretty she looks, cold in death!) will fit you. All we have to do is to practise a little, and then away we start."

O'Brien then, with some difficulty, pulled off the man's jacket and trowsers, and having so done, buried him in the snow. The poor girl was despoiled of her gown and upper petticoat with every decency, and also buried. We collected the clothes and stilts, and removed to another quarter of the wood, where we found a well-sheltered spot, and took our meal. As we did not travel that night as usual, we had to prepare our own bed. We scraped away the snow, and made ourselves as comfortable as we could without a fire, but the weather was dreadful.

"Peter," said O'Brien, "I'm melancholy. Here, drink plenty;" and he handed me the flask of spirits, which had never been empty.

"Drink more, Peter."

"I cannot, O'Brien, without being tipsy."

"Never mind that, drink more; see how these two poor devils lost their lives by falling

asleep in the snow. Peter," said O'Brien, starting up, "you sha'n't sleep here—follow me."

I expostulated in vain. It was almost dark, and he led me to the village, near which he pitched upon a hovel, (a sort of outhouse.) "Peter, here is shelter; lie down and sleep, and I'll keep the watch. Not a word, I will have it—down at once."

I did so, and in a very few minutes was fast asleep, for I was worn out with cold and fatigue. For several days we had walked all night, and the rest we gained by day was trifling. O how I longed for a warm bed with four or five blankets! Just as the day broke, O'Brien roused me; he had stood sentry all night, and looked very haggard.

"O'Brien, you are ill," said I.

"Not a bit; but I've emptied the brandy-flask; and that's a bad job. However, it is to be remedied."

We then returned to the wood in a mizzling rain and fog, for the weather had changed, and the frost had broken up. The thaw was even worse than the frost, and we felt the cold more. O'Brien again insisted upon my sleeping in the outhouse, but this time I positively refused without he would also sleep there, pointing out

to him, that we ran no more risk, and perhaps not so much, as if he staid outside. Finding I was positive he at last consented, and we both gained it unperceived. We laid down, but I did not go to sleep for some time, I was so anxious to see O'Brien fast asleep. He went in and out several times, during which I pretended to be fast asleep; at last it rained in torrents, and then he laid down again, and in a few minutes, overpowered by nature, he fell fast asleep, snoring so loudly, that I was afraid some one would hear us. I then got up and watched, occasionally lying down and slumbering awhile, and then going to the door.

CHAPTER III.

Exalted with our success, we march through France without touching the ground—I become feminine—We are voluntary conscripts.

AT day-break I called O'Brien, who jumped up in a great hurry.

“Sure I’ve been asleep, Peter!”

“Yes, you have,” replied I, “and I thank Heaven that you have, for no one could stand such fatigue as you have, much longer; and if you fall ill, what will become of me?” This was touching him on the right point.

“Well, Peter, since there’s no harm come of it, there’s no harm done. I’ve had sleep enough for the next week, that’s certain.”

We returned to the wood; the snow had disappeared, and the rain ceased; the sun shone out from between the clouds and we felt warm.

“Don’t pass so near that way,” said O’Brien, “we shall see the poor creatures, now that the snow is gone. Peter, we must shift our quarters to-night, for I have been to every cabaret in the village, and I cannot go there any more without suspicion, although I am a gend’-arme.”

We remained there till the evening, and then set off, still returning towards Givet. About an hour before daylight we arrived at a copse of trees close to the road-side, and surrounded by a ditch, not above a quarter of a mile from a village. “It appears to me,” said O’Brien, “that this will do; I will now put you there, and then go boldly to the village and see what I can get, for here we must stay at least a week.”

We walked to the copse, and the ditch being rather too wide for me to leap, O’Brien laid the four stilts together, so as to form a bridge, over which I contrived to walk. Tossing to me all the bundles, and desiring me to leave the stilts as a bridge for him on his return, he set off to the village with his musket on his shoulder. He was away two hours, when he returned with a large supply of provisions, the best we had ever had. French saucissons seasoned with

garlic, which I thought delightful ; four bottles of brandy, besides his flask ; a piece of hung beef, and six loaves of bread, besides half a baked goose and part of a large pie.

“ There,” said he, “ we have enough for a good week ; and look here, Peter, this is better than all.” And he showed me two large horse-rugs.

“ Excellent,” replied I ; “ now we shall be comfortable.”

“ I paid honestly for all but these rugs,” observed O’Brien ; “ I was afraid to buy them, so I stole them. However, we’ll leave them here for those they belong to—it’s only borrowing, after all.”

We now prepared a very comfortable shelter with branches, which we wove together, and laying the leaves in the sun to dry, soon obtained a soft bed to put our horse-rug on, while we covered ourselves up with the other. Our bridge of stilts we had removed, so that we felt ourselves quite secure from surprise. That evening we did nothing but carouse—the goose, the pie, the saucissons as big as my arm, were alternately attacked, and we went to the ditch to drink water, and then ate again. This was quite happiness to what we had suf-

ferred, especially with the prospect of a good bed. At dark, to bed we went, and slept soundly; I never felt more refreshed during our wanderings. At day-light O'Brien got up.

"Now, Peter, a little practice before breakfast."

"What practice do you mean?"

"Mean! why on the stilts. I expect in a week that you'll be able to dance a gavotte at least; for mind me, Peter, you travel out of France upon these stilts, depend upon it."

O'Brien then took the stilts belonging to the man, giving me those of the woman. We strapped them to our thighs, and by fixing our backs to a tree, contrived to get upright upon them: but at the first attempt to walk, O'Brien fell to the right, and I fell to the left. O'Brien fell against a tree, but I fell on my nose, and made it bleed very much; however, we laughed and got up again, and although we had several falls, at last we made a better hand of them. We then had some difficulty in getting down again, but we found out how, by again resorting to a tree. After breakfast we strapped them on again, and practised, and so we continued to do for the whole day, when we again attacked our provisions, and fell asleep under our horse-

rug. This continued for five days, by which time, being constantly on the stilts, we became very expert; and although I could not dance a gavotte—for I did not know what that was—I could hop about with them with the greatest ease.

“One day’s more practice,” said O’Brien, “for our provisions will last one day more, and then we start; but this time we must rehearse in costume.”

O’Brien then dressed me in the poor girl’s clothes, and himself in the man’s; they fitted very well, and the last day we practised as man and woman.

“Peter, you make a very pretty girl,” said O’Brien.

“But, O’Brien,” replied I, “as these petticoats are not very warm, I mean to cut off my trowsers up to my knees, and wear them underneath.”

“That’s all right,” said O’Brien.

The next morning we made use of our stilts to cross the ditch, and carrying them in our hands we boldly set off on the high road to Malines. We met several people, gend’armes and others, but with the exception of some remarks upon my good looks, we passed un-

noticed. Towards the evening we arrived at the village where we had slept in the outhouse, and as soon as we entered it, we put on our stilts, and commenced a march. When the crowd had gathered we held out our caps, and receiving nine or ten sous, we entered a cabaret. Many questions were asked us, as to where we came from, and O'Brien answered, telling lies innumerable. I played the modest girl, and O'Brien, who stated I was his sister, appeared very careful and jealous of any attention. We slept well, and the next morning continued our route to Malines. We very often put on our stilts for practice on the road, which detained us very much, and it was not until the eighth day, without any variety or any interruption, that we arrived at Malines. As we entered the barriers we put on our stilts, and marched boldly on. The guard at the gate stopped us, not from suspicion, but to amuse themselves, and I was forced to submit to several kisses from their garlic lips, before we were allowed to enter the town. We again mounted on our stilts, for the guard had forced us to dismount, or they could not have kissed me, every now and then imitating a dance, until we arrived at the *grande place*, where we stopped opposite the

hotel, and commenced a sort of waltz which we had practised. The people in the hotel looked out of the window to see our exhibition, and when we had finished I went up to the windows with O'Brien's cap to collect money. What was my surprise to perceive Colonel O'Brien looking full in my face, and staring very hard at me; what was my greater astonishment at seeing Celeste, who immediately recognized me, and ran back to the sofa in the room, putting her hands up to her eyes, and crying out, *C'est lui, c'est lui!* Fortunately O'Brien was close to me, or I should have fallen, but he supported me. "Peter, ask the crowd for money, or you are lost." I did so, and collecting some pence, then asked him what I should do. "Go back to the window—you can then judge of what will happen." I returned to the window; Colonel O'Brien had disappeared, but Celeste was there, as if waiting for me. I held out the cap to her, and she thrust her hand into it. The cap sunk with the weight. I took out a purse, which I kept closed in my hand, and put it into my bosom. Celeste then retired from the window, and when she had gone to the back of the room kissed her hand to me, and went out at the door. I remained stupified for a

moment, but O'Brien roused me, and we quitted the *grande place*, taking up our quarters at a little cabaret. On examining the purse, I found fifty Napoleons in it; these must have been obtained from her father. I cried over them with delight. O'Brien was also much affected at the kindness of the colonel. "He's a real O'Brien, every inch of him," said he; "even this cursed country can't spoil the breed."

At the cabaret where we stopped, we were informed, that the officer who was at the hotel had been appointed to the command of the strong fort of Bergen-op-Zoom, and was proceeding thither.

"We must not chance to meet him again, if possible," said O'Brien; "it would be treading too close upon the heels of his duty. Neither will it do to appear on stilts among the dikes; so, Peter, we'll just stump on clear of this town, and then we'll trust to our wits."

We walked out of the town early in the morning, after O'Brien had made purchases of some of the clothes usually worn by the peasantry. When within a few miles of St. Nicholas, we threw away our stilts and the clothes which we had on, and dressed ourselves

in those O'Brien had purchased. O'Brien had not forgot to provide us with two large brown-coloured blankets, which we strapped on to our shoulders, as the soldiers do their coats.

"But what are we to pass for now, O'Brien?"

"Peter, I will settle that point before night. My wits are working, but I like to trust to chance for a stray idea or so; we must walk fast, or we shall be smothered with the snow."

It was bitter cold weather, and the snow had fallen heavily during the whole day; but although nearly dusk, there was a bright moon ready for us. We walked very fast, and soon observed persons ahead of us. "Let us overtake them, we may obtain some information." As we came up with them, one of them (they were both lads of seventeen to eighteen) said to O'Brien, "I thought we were the last, but I was mistaken. How far is it now to St. Nicholas?"

"How should I know?" replied O'Brien, "I am a stranger in these parts as well as yourself."

"From what part of France do you come?" demanded the other, his teeth chattering with the cold, for he was badly clothed, and with little defence from the inclement weather.

"From Montpellier," replied O'Brien.

"And I from Toulouse. A sad change, comrade, from olives and vines to such a climate as this. Curse the conscription: I intended to have taken a little wife next year."

O'Brien gave me a push, as if to say, "Here's something that will do," and then continued—

"And curse the conscription I say too, for I had just married, and now my wife is left to be annoyed by the attention of the *fermier général*. But it can't be helped. *C'est pour la France et pour la gloire.*"

"We shall be too late to get a billet," replied the other, "and not a sous have I in my pockets. I doubt if I get up with the main body till they are at Flushing. By our route, they are at Axel to-day."

"If we arrive at St. Nicholas we shall do well," replied O'Brien; "but I have a little money left, and I'll not see a comrade want a supper or a bed who is going to serve his country. You can repay me when we meet at Flushing."

"That I will, with thanks," replied the Frenchman, "and so will Jaques, here, if you will trust him."

“ With pleasure,” replied O’Brien, who then entered into a long conversation, by which he drew out from the Frenchman that a party of conscripts had been ordered to Flushing, and that they had dropped behind the main body. O’Brien passed himself off as a conscript belonging to the party, and me as his brother, who had resolved to join the army as a drummer, rather than part with him. In about an hour we arrived at St. Nicholas, and after some difficulty obtained entrance into a cabaret. “ *Vive la France !*” said O’Brien, going up to the fire, and throwing the snow off his hat. In a short time we were seated to a good supper and very tolerable wine, the hostess sitting down by us, and listening to the true narratives of the real conscripts, and the false one of O’Brien. After supper the conscript who first addressed us pulled out his printed paper, with the route laid down, and observed that we were two days behind the others. O’Brien read it over, and laid it on the table, at the same time calling for more wine, having already pushed it round very freely. We did not drink much ourselves, but plied them hard, and at last the conscript commenced the whole history of his intended marriage and his disappointment, tearing his hair,

and crying now and then. "Never mind," interrupted O'Brien, every two or three minutes, "*buvons un autre coup pour la gloire!*" and thus he continued to make them both drink until they reeled away to bed, forgetting their printed paper, which O'Brien had some time before slipped away from the table. We also retired to our room, when O'Brien observed to me, "Peter, this description is as much like me as I am to old Nick: but that's of no consequence, as nobody goes willingly as a conscript, and therefore they will never have a doubt but that it is all right. We must be off early tomorrow, while these good people are in bed, and steal a long march upon them. I consider that we are now safe as far as Flushing."

CHAPTER IV.

What occurred at Flushing, and what occurred when we got out of Flushing:

AN hour before day-break we started; the snow was thick on the ground, but the sky was clear, and without any difficulty or interruption we passed through the towns of Axel and Halst, arrived at Terneuse on the fourth day, and went over to Flushing in company with about a dozen more stragglers from the main body. As we landed, the guard asked us whether we were conscripts. O'Brien replied that he was, and held out his paper. They took his name, or rather that of the person it belonged to, down in a book, and told him that he must apply to the *état major* before three o'clock. We passed on, delighted with our success, and then O'Brien pulled out the letter which had been given to

him by the woman of the cabaret who had offered to assist me to escape when O'Brien passed off as a gend'arme, and reading the address, demanded his way to the street. We soon found out the house, and entered.

"Conscripts!" said the woman of the house, looking at O'Brien; "I am billeted full already. It must be a mistake. Where is your order?"

"Read," said O'Brien, handing her the letter.

She read the letter, and putting it into her neckerchief, desired him to follow her. O'Brien beckoned me to come, and we went into a small room. "What can I do for you?" said the woman; "I will do all in my power; but, alas! you will march from here in two or three days."

"Never mind," replied O'Brien, "we will talk the matter over by-and-bye, but at present only oblige us by letting us remain in this little room; we do not wish to be seen."

"*Comment donc!*—you a conscript, and not wish to be seen! Are you, then, intending to desert?"

"Answer me one question; you have read that letter, do you intend to act up to its purport, as your sister requests?"

"As I hope for mercy I will, if I suffer everything. She is a dear sister, and would

not write so earnestly if she had not strong reasons. My house and everything you command are yours—can I say more?”

“But,” continued O’Brien, “suppose I did intend to desert, would you then assist me?”

“At my peril,” replied the woman; “have you not assisted my family when in difficulty?”

“Well, then, I will not at present detain you from your business; I have heard you called several times. Let us have dinner when convenient, and we will remain here.”

“If I have any knowledge of phiz—*what d’ye call it*,” observed O’Brien, after she left us, “there is honesty in that woman, and I must trust her, but not yet; we must wait till the conscripts have gone.” I agreed with O’Brien, and we remained talking until an hour afterwards, when the woman brought us our dinner.

“What is your name?” inquired O’Brien.

“Louise Eustache; you might have read it on the letter.”

“Are you married?”

“O yes, these six years. My husband is seldom at home; he is a Flushing pilot. A

hard life, harder even than that of a soldier. Who is this lad?"

"He is my brother, who, if I go as a soldier, intends to volunteer as a drummer."

"*Pauvre enfant ! c'est dommage.*"

The cabaret was full of conscripts and other people, so that the hostess had enough to do. At night we were shown by her into a small bed-room, adjoining the room we occupied. "You are quite alone here; the conscripts are to muster to-morrow, I find, in the *Place d'Armes*, at two o'clock: do you intend to go?"

"No," replied O'Brien: "they will think that I am behind. It is of no consequence."

"Well," replied the woman, "do as you please, you may trust me; but I am so busy, without any one to assist me, that until they leave the town, I can hardly find time to speak to you."

"That will be soon enough, my good hostess," replied O'Brien: "*au revoir.*"

The next evening, the woman came in, in some alarm, stating that a conscript had arrived whose name had been given in before, and that the person who had given it in, had not mustered at the place. That the conscript had

declared, that his pass had been stolen from him by a person with whom he had stopped at St. Nicholas, and that there were orders for a strict search to be made through the town, as it was known that some English officers had escaped, and it was supposed that one of them had obtained the pass. "Surely you're not English?" inquired the woman, looking earnestly at O'Brien.

"Indeed, but I am, my dear," replied O'Brien: "and so is this lad with me; and the favour which your sister requires is, that you help us over the water, for which service there are one hundred louis ready to be paid upon delivery of us."

"*Oh, mon Dieu! mais c'est impossible.*"

"Impossible!" replied O'Brien; "was that the answer I gave your sister in her trouble?"

"*Au moins c'est difficile.*"

"That's quite another concern; but with your husband a pilot! I should think a great part of the difficulty removed."

"My husband! I've no power over him," replied the woman, putting the apron up to her eyes.

"But one hundred louis may have," replied O'Brien.

"There is truth in that," observed the woman, after a pause; "but what am I to do, if they come to search the house?"

"Send us out of it, until you can find an opportunity to send us to England. I leave it all to you—your sister expects it from you."

"And she shall not be disappointed, if God helps us," replied the woman, after a short pause; "but I fear you must leave this house and the town also to-night."

"How are we to leave the town?"

"I will arrange that; be ready at four o'clock, for the gates are shut at dusk. I must go now, for there is no time to be lost."

"We are in a nice mess now, O'Brien," observed I, after the woman had quitted the room.

"Devil-a-bit, Peter; I feel no anxiety whatever, except at leaving such good quarters."

We packed up all our effects, not forgetting our two blankets, and waited the return of the hostess. In about an hour she entered the room. "I have spoken to my husband's sister, who lives about two miles on the road to Middelburg. She is in town now, for it is market-day, and you will be safe where she hides you,

I told her, it was by my husband's request, or she would not have consented. Here, boy, put on these clothes: I will assist you." Once more I was dressed as a girl, and when my clothes were on, O'Brien burst out into laughter at my blue stockings and short petticoats. "*Il n'est pas mal*," observed the hostess, as she fixed a small cap on my head, and then tied a kerchief under my chin, which partly hid my face. O'Brien put on a great coat, which the woman handed to him, with a wide-brimmed hat. "Now follow me!" She led us into the street, which was thronged, till we arrived at the market-place, when she met another woman, who joined her. At the end of the market-place stood a small horse and cart, into which the strange woman and I mounted, while O'Brien, by the directions of the landlady, led the horse through the crowd until we arrived at the barriers, when she wished us good day in a loud voice before the guard. The guard took no notice of us, and we passed safely through, and found ourselves upon a neatly-paved road, as straight as an arrow, and lined on each side with high trees and a ditch. In about an hour we stopped near to the farm-house of the woman who was in charge of us. "Do you observe

that wood?" said she to O'Brien, pointing to one about half a mile from the road. "I dare not take you into the house, my husband is so violent against the English, who captured his schuyt, and made him a poor man, that he would inform against you immediately; but go you there, make yourselves as comfortable as you can to-night, and to-morrow I will send you what you want. *Adieu! Je vous plains, pauvre enfant,*" said she, looking at me, as she drove off in the cart towards her own house.

"Peter," said O'Brien, "I think that her kicking us out of her house is a proof of her sincerity, and therefore I say no more about it; we have the brandy-flask to keep up our spirits. Now then for the wood, though, by the powers, I shall have no relish for any of your pic-nic parties, as they call them, for the next twelve years."

"But, O'Brien, how can I get over this ditch in petticoats? I could hardly leap it in my own clothes."

"You must tie your petticoats round your waist and make a good run; get over as far as you can, and I will drag you through the rest."

"But you forget that we are to sleep in the

wood, and that it's no laughing matter to get wet through, freezing so hard as it does now."

"Very true, Peter; but as the snow lies so deep upon the ditch, perhaps the ice may bear. I'll try; if it bears me, it will not condescend to bend at your shrimp of a carcase."

O'Brien tried the ice, which was firm, and we both walked over, and making all the haste we could, arrived at the wood, as the woman called it, but which was not more than a clump of trees of about half an acre. We cleared away the snow for about six feet round a very hollow part, and then O'Brien cut stakes and fixed them in the earth, to which we stretched one blanket. The snow being about two feet deep, there was plenty of room to creep underneath the blanket. We then collected all the leaves we could, beating the snow off them, and laid them at the bottom of the hole; over the leaves we spread the other blanket, and taking our bundles in, we then stopped up with snow every side of the upper blanket, except the hole to creep in at. It was quite astonishing what a warm place this became in a short time after we had remained in it. It was almost too warm, although the weather outside was piercingly cold. After a good meal and a dose of brandy, we both fell

fast asleep, but not until I had taken off my woman's attire and resumed my own clothes. We never slept better or more warmly than we did in this hole which we had made on the ground, covered with ice and snow.

CHAPTER V.

O'Brien parts company to hunt for provisions, and I have other company in consequence of another hunt—O'Brien pathetically mourns my death and finds me alive—We escape.

THE ensuing morning we looked out anxiously for the promised assistance, for we were not very rich in provisions, although what we had were of a very good quality. It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon that we perceived a little girl coming towards us, escorted by a large mastiff. When she arrived at the copse of trees where we lay concealed, she cried out to the dog in Dutch, who immediately scoured the wood until he came to our hiding-place, when he crouched down at the entrance, barking furiously, and putting us in no small dread, lest he should attack us; but the little girl

spoke to him again, and he remained in the same position, looking at us, wagging his tail, with his under jaw lying on the snow. She soon came up, and looking underneath, put a basket in, and nodded her head. We emptied the basket. O'Brien took out a napoleon and offered it to her; she refused it, but O'Brien forced it into her hand, upon which she again spoke to the dog, who commenced barking so furiously at us, that we expected every moment he would fly upon us. The girl at the same time presenting the napoleon, and pointing to the dog, I went forward and took the napoleon from her, at which she immediately silenced the enormous brute, and laughing at us, hastened away.

“By the powers, that’s a fine little girl!” said O'Brien; “I’ll back her and her dog against any man. Well, I never had a dog set at me for giving money before, but we live and learn, Peter; now let’s see what she brought in the basket.” We found hard-boiled eggs, bread, and a smoked mutton-ham, with a large bottle of gin. “What a nice little girl! I hope she will often favour us with her company. I’ve been thinking, Peter, that we’re quite as well off here, as in a midshipman’s berth.”

“ You forget that you are a lieutenant.”

“ Well, so I did, Peter, and that’s the truth, but it’s the force of habit. Now let’s make our dinner. It’s a new-fashioned way though, of making a meal, lying down; but however, it’s economical, for it must take longer to swallow the victuals.”

“ The Romans used to eat their meals lying down, so I have read, O’Brien.”

“ I can’t say that I ever heard it mentioned in Ireland, but that don’t prove that it was not the case; so, Peter, I’ll take your word for it. Murder! how fast it snows again. I wonder what my father’s thinking on just at this moment.”

This observation of O’Brien induced us to talk about our friends and relations in England, and after much conversation we fell fast asleep. The next morning we found the snow had fallen about eight inches, and weighed down our upper blanket so much, that we were obliged to go out and cut stakes to support it up from the inside. While we were thus employed, we heard a loud noise and shouting, and perceived several men, apparently armed and accompanied with dogs, running straight in the direction of the wood where we were encamped. We

were much alarmed, thinking that they were in search of us, but on a sudden they turned off in another direction, continuing with the same speed as before. "What could it be?" said I to O'Brien. "I can't exactly say, Peter; but I should think that they were hunting something, and the only game that I think likely to be in such a place as this are otters." I was of the same opinion. We expected the little girl, but she did not come, and after looking out for her till dark, we crawled into our hole and supped upon the remainder of our provisions.

The next day, as may be supposed, we were very anxious for her arrival, but she did not appear at the time expected. Night again came on, and we went to bed without having any sustenance, except a small piece of bread that was left, and some gin which was remaining in the flask. "Peter," said O'Brien, "if she don't come again to-morrow, I'll try what I can do; for I've no idea of our dying of hunger here, like the two babes in the wood, and being found covered up with dead leaves. If she does not appear at three o'clock, I'm off for provisions, and I don't see much danger, for in

this dress I look as much of a boor as any man in Holland."

We passed an uneasy night, as we felt convinced, either that the danger was so great that they dare not venture to assist us, or, that being overruled, they had betrayed us, and left us to manage how we could. The next morning I climbed up the only large tree in the copse and looked round, especially in the direction of the farm-house belonging to the woman who had pointed out to us our place of concealment; but nothing was to be seen but one vast tract of flat country covered with snow, and now and then a vehicle passing at a distance on the Middelburg road. I descended, and found O'Brien preparing for a start. He was very melancholy, and said to me, "Peter, if I am taken, you must, at all risks, put on your girl's clothes and go to Flushing to the cabaret. The women there, I am sure, will protect you, and send you back to England. I only want two napoleons; take all the rest, you will require them. If I am not back by to-night, set off for Flushing to-morrow morning." O'Brien waited some time longer, talking with me, and it then being past four o'clock, he shook

me by the hand, and, without speaking, left the wood. I never felt miserable during the whole time since we were first put into prison at Toulon, till that moment, and, when he was a hundred yards off, I knelt down and prayed. He had been absent two hours, and it was quite dusk, when I heard a noise at a distance: it advanced every moment nearer and nearer. On a sudden, I heard a rustling of the bushes, and hastened under the blanket, which was covered with snow, in hopes that they might not perceive the entrance; but I was hardly there before in dashed after me an enormous wolf. I cried out, expecting to be torn to pieces every moment; but the creature lay on his belly, his mouth wide open, his eyes glaring, and his long tongue hanging out of his mouth, and although he touched me, he was so exhausted that he did not attack me. The noise increased, and I immediately perceived that it was the hunters in pursuit of him. I had crawled in feet first, the wolf ran in head-foremost, so that we lay head and tail. I crept out as fast as I could, and perceived men and dogs not two hundred yards off in full chace. I hastened to the large tree, and had not ascended six feet when they came up; the dogs flew to the hole, and in a very short time

the wolf was killed. The hunters being too busy to observe me, I had, in the mean time, climbed up the trunk of the tree, and hid myself as well as I could. Being not fifteen yards from them, I heard their expressions of surprise as they lifted up the blanket and dragged out the dead wolf, which they carried away with them; their conversation being in Dutch, I could not understand it, but I was certain that they made use of the word "*English*." The hunters and dogs quitted the copse, and I was about to descend, when one of them returned, and pulling up the blankets, rolled them together and walked away with them. Fortunately he did not perceive our bundles by the little light given by the moon. I waited a short time and then came down. What to do I knew not. If I did not remain and O'Brien returned, what would he think? If I did, I should be dead with cold before the morning. I looked for our bundles, and found that in the conflict between the dogs and the wolf, they had been buried among the leaves. I recollected O'Brien's advice, and dressed myself in the girl's clothes, but I could not make up my mind to go to Flushing. So I resolved to walk towards the farm-house, which being close

to the road, would give me a chance of meeting with O'Brien. I soon arrived there, and prowled round it for some time, but the doors and windows were all fast, and I dared not knock, after what the woman had said about her husband's inveteracy to the English. At last, as I looked round and round, quite at a loss what to do, I thought I saw a figure at a distance proceeding in the direction of the copse. I hastened after it and saw it enter. I then advanced very cautiously, for although I thought it might be O'Brien, yet it was possible that it was one of the men who chased the wolf, in search of more plunder. But I soon heard O'Brien's voice, and I hastened towards him. I was close to him without his perceiving me, and found him sitting down with his face covered up in his two hands. At last he cried, "O Pater! my poor Pater! are you taken at last? Could I not leave you for one hour in safety? Ochone! why did I leave you? My poor, poor Pater! simple you were, sure enough, and that's why I loved you; but, Peter, I would have made a man of you, for you'd all the materials, that's the truth—and a fine man too. Where am I to look for you, Pater? Where am I to find you, Pater? You're fast

locked up by this time, and all my trouble's gone for nothing. But I'll be locked up too, Pater. Where you are, will I be; and if we can't go to England together, why then we'll go back to that blackguard hole at Givet together. Ochone! Ochone!" O'Brien spoke no more, but burst into tears. I was much affected with this proof of O'Brien's sincere regard, and I came to his side, and clasped him in my arms. O'Brien stared at me,—“Who are you, you ugly Dutch frow?” (for he had quite forgotten the woman's dress at the moment,) but recollecting himself, he hugged me in his arms. “Pater, you come as near to an angel's shape as you can, for you come in that of a woman, to comfort me; for, to tell the truth, I was very much distressed at not finding you here; and all the blankets gone to boot. What has been the matter?” I explained in as few words as I could.

“Well, Peter, I'm happy to find you all safe, and much happier to find that you can be trusted when I leave you, for you could not have behaved more prudently. Now I'll tell you what I did, which was not much, as it happened. I knew that there was no cabaret between us and Flushing, for I took particular

notice as I came along: so I took the road to Middelburg, and found but one, which was full of soldiers. I passed it, and found no other. As I came back past the same cabaret, one of the soldiers came out to me, but I walked along the road. He quickened his pace, and so did I mine, for I expected mischief. At last he came up to me, and spoke to me in Dutch, to which I gave him no answer. He collared me, and then I thought it convenient to pretend that I was deaf and dumb. I pointed to my mouth with an Au—au—and then to my ears, and shook my head; but he would not be convinced, and I heard him say something about English. I then knew that there was no time to be lost, so I first burst out into a loud laugh and stopped; and on his attempting to force me, I kicked up his heels, and he fell on the ice with such a rap on the pate, that I doubt if he has recovered it by this time. There I left him, and have run back as hard as I could, without anything for Peter to fill his little hungry inside with. Now, Peter, what's your opinion? for they say, that out of the mouth of babes there is wisdom; and although I never saw anything come out of their mouths but sour milk, yet perhaps I may be

more fortunate this time, for, Peter, you're but a baby."

"Not a small one, O'Brien, although not quite so large as Fingal's *babby* that you told me the story of. My idea is this. Let us, at all hazards, go to the farm-house. They have assisted us, and may be inclined to do so again; if they refuse, we must push on to Flushing and take our chance."

"Well," observed O'Brien, after a pause, "I think we can do no better, so let's be off." We went to the farm-house, and, as we approached the door, were met by the great mastiff. I started back, O'Brien boldly advanced. "He's a clever dog, and may know us again. I'll go up," said O'Brien, not stopping while he spoke, "and pat his head; if he flies at me, I shall be no worse than I was before, for depend upon it he will not allow us to go back again." O'Brien by this time had advanced to the dog, who looked earnestly and angrily at him. He patted his head, the dog growled, but O'Brien put his arm round his neck, and patting him again, whistled to him, and went to the door of the farm-house. The dog followed him silently but closely. O'Brien knocked,

and the door was opened by the little girl: the mastiff advanced to the girl, and then turned round, facing O'Brien, as much as to say—"Is he to come in?" The girl spoke to the dog, and went in-doors. During her absence the mastiff laid down at the threshold. In a few seconds the woman who had brought us from Flushing came out, and desired us to enter. She spoke very good French, and told us that fortunately her husband was absent; that the reason why we had not been supplied was, that a wolf had met her little girl returning the other day, but had been beaten off by the mastiff, and that she was afraid to allow her to go again; that she heard the wolf had been killed this evening, and had intended her girl to have gone to us early to-morrow morning. That wolves were hardly known in that country, but that the severe winter had brought them down to the lowlands, a very rare circumstance, occurring perhaps not once in twenty years. "But how did you pass the mastiff?" said she; "that has surprised my daughter and me." O'Brien told her, upon which she said, "that the English were really '*des braves*.' No other man had ever done the same." So I thought, for nothing would have induced me to

do it. O'Brien then told the history of the death of the wolf, with all particulars, and our intention, if we could not do better, of returning to Flushing.

"I heard that Pierre Eustache came home yesterday," replied the woman; "and I do think that you will be safer there than here, for they will never think of looking for you among the *casernes*, which join their cabaret."

"Will you lend us your assistance to get in?"

"I will see what I can do. But are you not hungry?"

"About as hungry as men who have eaten nothing for two days."

"*Mon Dieu ! c'est vrai.* I never thought it was so long, but those whose stomachs are filled forget those who are empty. God make us better and more charitable !"

She spoke to the little girl in Dutch, who hastened to load the table, which we hastened to empty. The little girl stared at our voracity ; but at last she laughed out, and clapped her hands at every fresh mouthful which we took, and pressed us to eat more. She allowed me to kiss her, until her mother told her that I was not a woman, when she pouted at me,

and beat me off. Before midnight we were fast asleep upon the benches before the kitchen fire, and at day-break were roused up by the woman, who offered us some bread and spirits; and then we went out to the door, where we found the horse and cart all ready, and loaded with vegetables for the market. The woman, the little girl, and myself got in, O'Brien leading as before, and the mastiff following. We had learnt the dog's name, which was *Achille*, and he seemed to be quite fond of us. We passed the dreaded barriers without interruption, and in ten minutes entered the cabaret of Eustache; and immediately walked into the little room through a crowd of soldiers, two of whom chucked me under the chin. Who should we find there but Eustache, the pilot himself, in conversation with his wife; and it appeared that they were talking about us, she insisting, and he unwilling to have any hand in the business. "Well, here they are themselves, Eustache: the soldiers who have seen them come in will never believe that this is their first entry, if you give them up. I leave them to make their own bargain; but mark me, Eustache, I have slaved night and day in this cabaret for your profit; if you do not oblige

me and my family, I no longer keep a cabaret for you."

Madame Eustache then quitted the room with her husband's sister and little girl, and O'Brien immediately accosted him. "I promise you," said he to Eustache, "one hundred louis if you put us on shore at any part of England, or on board of any English man-of-war; and if you do it within a week, I will make it twenty louis more." O'Brien then pulled out the fifty napoleons given us by Celeste, for our own were not yet expended, and laid them on the table. "Here is this in advance, to prove my sincerity. Say, is it a bargain or not?"

"I never yet heard of a poor man who could withstand his wife's arguments, backed with one hundred and twenty louis," said Eustache smiling, and sweeping the money off the table.

"I presume you have no objection to start to-night? That will be ten louis more in your favour," replied O'Brien.

"I shall earn them," replied Eustache; "the sooner I am off the better, for I could not long conceal you here. The young frow with you is, I suppose, your companion that my wife mentioned. He has begun to suffer hardships early. Come, now sit down and talk, for nothing can be done till dark."

O'Brien narrated the adventures attending our escape, at which Eustache laughed heartily; the more so, at the mistake which his wife was under, as to the obligations of the family. "If I did not feel inclined to assist you before, I do now, just for the laugh I shall have at her when I come back, and if she wants any more assistance for the sake of her relations, I shall remind her of this anecdote; but she's a good woman and a good wife to boot, only too fond of her sisters." At dusk he equipped us both in sailor's jackets and trowsers, and desired us to follow him boldly. He passed the guard, who knew him well. "What, to sea already?" said one. "You have quarrelled with your wife." At which they all laughed, and we joined. We gained the beach, jumped into his little boat, pulled off to his vessel, and, in a few minutes, were under weigh. With a strong tide and a fair wind we were soon clear of the Scheldt, and the next morning a cutter hove in sight. We steered for her, ran under her lee, O'Brien hailed for a boat, and Eustache, receiving my bill for the remainder of his money, wished us success; we shook hands, and in a few minutes, found ourselves once more under the British pennant.

CHAPTER VI.

Adventures at home—I am introduced to my grandfather—He obtains employment for O'Brien and myself, and we join a frigate.

As soon as we were on the deck of the cutter, the lieutenant commanding her inquired of us, in a consequential manner, who we were. O'Brien replied that we were English prisoners who had escaped. "Oh, midshipmen, I presume," replied the lieutenant; "I heard that some had contrived to get away."

"My name, sir," said O'Brien, "is Lieutenant O'Brien; and if you'll send for a Steel's List, I will have the honour of pointing it out to you. This young gentleman is Mr. Peter Simple, midshipman, and grandson to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Privilege."

The lieutenant, who was a little snub-nosed man, with a pimply face, then altered his manner towards us, and begged we would step down into the cabin, where he offered what perhaps was the greatest of all luxuries to us, some English cheese and bottled porter. "Pray," said he, "did you see anything of one of my officers, who was taken prisoner when I was sent with despatches to the Mediterranean fleet?"

"May I first ask the name of your lively little craft?" said O'Brien.

"The Snapper," replied the lieutenant.

"Och, murder! sure enough we met him. He was sent to Verdun, but we had the pleasure of his company *en route* as far as Montpelier. A remarkably genteel, well dressed young man, was he not?"

"Why, I can't say much about his gentility; indeed, I am not much of a judge. As for his dress, he ought to have dressed well, but he never did when on board of me. His father is my tailor, and I took him as midshipman, just to square an account between us."

"That's exactly what I thought," replied O'Brien.

He did not say any more, which I was glad

of, as the lieutenant might not have been pleased at what had occurred.

“When do you expect to run into port?” demanded O’Brien; for we were rather anxious to put our feet ashore again in old England. The lieutenant replied that his cruise was nearly up; and he considered our arrival quite sufficient reason for him to run in directly, and that he intended to put his helm up after the people had had their dinner. We were much delighted with this intelligence, and still more to see the intention put into execution half an hour afterwards.

In three days we anchored at Spithead, and went on shore with the lieutenant to report ourselves to the admiral. Oh! with what joy did I first put my foot on the shingle beach at Sallyport, and then hasten to the post-office to put in a long letter which I had written to my mother. We did not go to the admiral’s, but merely reported ourselves at the admiral’s office; for we had no clothes fit to appear in. But we called at Meredith’s the tailor, and he promised that, by the next morning, we should be fitted complete. We then ordered new hats, and everything we required, and went to the Fountain

inn. O'Brien refused to go to the Blue Posts, as being only a receptacle for midshipmen. By eleven o'clock the next morning, we were fit to appear before the admiral, who received us very kindly, and requested our company to dinner. As I did not intend setting off for home until I had received an answer from my mother, we, of course, accepted the invitation.

There was a large party of naval officers and ladies, and O'Brien amused them very much during dinner. When the ladies left the room, the admiral's wife told me to come up with them; and when we arrived at the drawing-room, the ladies all gathered round me, and I had to narrate the whole of my adventures, which very much entertained and interested them. The next morning I received a letter from my mother—such a kind one! entreating me to come home as fast as I could, and bring my *preserver* O'Brien with me. I showed it to O'Brien, and asked him whether he would accompany me.

“Why, Peter, my boy, I have a little business of some importance to transact; which is, to obtain my arrears of pay, and some prize-money which I find due. When I have settled

that point, I will go to town to pay my respects to the first lord of the admiralty, and then I think I will go and see your father and mother : for, until I know how matters stand, and whether I shall be able to go with spare cash in my pocket, I do not wish to see my own family ; so write down your address here, and you'll be sure I'll come, if it is only to square my accounts with you, for I am not a little in your debt."

I cashed a check sent by my father, and set off in the mail that night ; the next evening I arrived safe home. But I shall leave the reader to imagine the scene : to my mother I was always dear, and circumstances had rendered me of some importance to my father, for I was now an only son, and his prospects were very different from what they were when I left home. About a week afterwards, O'Brien joined us, having got through all his business. His first act was, to account with my father for his share of the expenses ; and he even insisted upon paying his half of the fifty napoleons given me by Celeste, which had been remitted to a banker at Paris before O'Brien's arrival, with a guarded letter of thanks from my father to Colonel O'Brien, and another from me to dear

little Celeste. When O'Brien had remained with us about a week, he told me that he had about one hundred and sixty pounds in his pocket, and that he intended to go and see his friends, as he was sure that he would be welcome even to Father M'Grath. "I mean to stay with them about a fortnight, and shall then return and apply for employment. Now, Peter, will you like to be again under my protection?"

"O'Brien, I will never quit you or your ship, if I can help it."

"Spoken like a sensible Peter. Well, then, I was promised immediate employment, and I will let you know as soon as the promise is performed."

O'Brien took his leave of my family, who were already very partial to him, and left that afternoon for Holyhead. My father no longer treated me as a child; indeed, it would have been an injustice if he had. I do not mean to say that I was a clever boy; but I had seen much of the world in a short time, and could act and think for myself. He often talked to me about his prospects, which were very different from what they were when I left him. My two uncles, his elder brothers, had died,

the third was married and had two daughters. If he had no son, my father would succeed to the title. The death of my elder brother Tom had brought me next in succession. My grandfather, Lord Privilege, who had taken no more notice of my father than occasionally sending him a basket of game, had latterly often invited him to the house, and had even requested, *some day or another*, to see his wife and family. He had also made a handsome addition to my father's income, which the death of my two uncles had enabled him to do. Against all this, my uncle's wife was reported to be again in the family way. I cannot say that I was pleased when my father used to speculate upon these chances so often as he did. I thought, not only as a man, but more particularly as a clergyman, he was much to blame; but I did not then know so much of the world. We had not heard from O'Brien for two months, when a letter arrived, stating that he had seen his family, and had bought a few acres of land, which had made them all quite happy, and had quitted with Father M'Grath's double blessing, with unlimited absolution; that he had now been a month in town trying for employment, but found that he could not obtain

it, although one promise was backed up by another.

A few days after this, my father received a note from Lord Privilege, requesting he would come and spend a few days with him, and bring his son Peter, who had escaped from the French prison. Of course, this was an invitation not to be neglected, and we accepted it forthwith. I must say, I felt rather in awe of my grandfather; he had kept the family at such a distance, that I had always heard his name mentioned more with reverence than with any feeling of kindred, but I was a little wiser now. We arrived at Eagle Park, a splendid estate, where he resided, and were received by a dozen servants in and out of livery, and ushered into his presence.

He was in his library, a large room, surrounded with handsome bookcases, sitting on an easy chair. A more venerable, placid old gentleman I never beheld; his grey hairs hung down on each side of his temples, and were collected in a small *queue* behind. He rose and bowed, as we were announced; to my father he held out *two* fingers in salutation, to me only *one*; but there was an elegance in the manner in which it was done which was indescribable.

He waved his hand to chairs, placed by the *gentleman* out of livery, and requested we would be seated. I could not at the time, help thinking of Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, and his remarks upon high breeding, which were so true; and I laughed to myself when I recollected that Mr. Chucks had once dined with him. As soon as the servants had quitted the room, the distance on the part of my grandfather appeared to wear off. He interrogated me on several points, and seemed pleased with my replies; but he always called me "child." After a conversation of half an hour, my father rose, saying that his lordship must be busy, and that we would go over the grounds till dinner-time. My grandfather rose, and we took a sort of formal leave; but it was not a formal leave after all, it was high breeding, respecting yourself and respecting others. For my part, I was pleased with the first interview, and so I told my father after we had left the room. "My dear Peter," replied he, "your grandfather has one idea which absorbs most others—the peerage, the estate, and the descent of it in the right line. As long as your uncles were alive, we were not thought of, as not being in the line of descent; nor should we now, but

that your uncle William has only daughters. Still we are not looked upon as actual, but only contingent, inheritors of the title. Were your uncle to die to-morrow, the difference in his behaviour would be manifested immediately."

"That is to say, instead of *two fingers* you would receive the *whole hand*, and instead of *one*, I should obtain promotion to *two*."

At this my father laughed heartily, saying, "Peter, you have exactly hit the mark. I cannot imagine how we ever could have been so blind as to call you the fool of the family."

To this I made no reply, for it was difficult so to do without depreciating others or depreciating myself: but I changed the subject by commenting on the beauties of the park, and the splendid timber with which it was adorned. "Yes, Peter," replied my father, with a sigh, "thirty-five thousand a-year in land, money in the funds, and timber worth at least forty thousand more, are not to be despised. But God wills everything." After this remark, my father appeared to be in deep thought, and I did not interrupt him.

We stayed ten days with my grandfather,

during which he would often detain me for two hours after breakfast, listening to my adventures, and I really believe was very partial to me. The day before I went away he said, "Child, you are going to-morrow; now tell me what you would like, as I wish to give you a token of regard. Don't be afraid; what shall it be—a watch and seals, or—anything you most fancy?"

"My Lord," replied I, "if you wish to do me a favour, it is, that you will apply to the First Lord of the Admiralty to appoint Lieutenant O'Brien to a fine frigate, and, at the same time, ask for a vacancy as midshipman for me."

"O'Brien!" replied his lordship; "I recollect it was he who accompanied you from France, and appears, by your account, to have been a true friend. I am pleased with your request, my child, and it shall be granted."

His lordship then desired me to hand him the paper and inkstandish, wrote by my directions, sealed the letter, and told me he would send me the answer. The next day we quitted Eagle Park, his lordship wishing my father good bye with *two* fingers, and to me extending *one*, as before; but he said, "I am

pleased with you, child; you may write occasionally."

When we were on our route home, my father observed that "I had made more progress with my grandfather than he had known any one to do, since he could recollect. His saying that you might write to him is at least ten thousand pounds to you in his will, for he never deceives any one, or changes his mind." My reply was, that I should like to see the ten thousand pounds, but that I was not so sanguine.

A few days after our return home, I received a letter and enclosure from Lord Privilege, the contents of which were as follow:—

"My dear Child,—I send you Lord ——'s answer, which I trust will prove satisfactory. My compliments to your family.

"Yours, &c.

"PRIVILEGE."

The enclosure was a handsome letter from the First Lord, stating that he had appointed O'Brien to the Sanglier frigate, and had ordered me to be received on board as midshipman. I was delighted to forward this letter to O'Brien's address, who in a few days sent me an answer, thanking me, and stating that he had received

his appointment, and that I need not join for a month, which was quite time enough, as the ship was refitting: but, that if my family were tired of me, which was sometimes the case in the best regulated families, why, then I should learn something of my duty by coming to Portsmouth. He concluded by sending his kind regards to all the family, and his *love* to my grandfather, which last I certainly did not forward in my letter of thanks. About a month afterwards I received a letter from O'Brien, stating that the ship was ready to go out of harbour, and would be anchored off Spit-head in a few days.

CHAPTER VII.

Captain and Mrs. To—Pork—We go to Plymouth and fall in with our old Captain.

I IMMEDIATELY took leave of my family, and set off for Portsmouth, and in two days arrived at the Fountain inn, where O'Brien was waiting to receive me. "Peter, my boy, I feel so much obliged to you, that if your uncle won't go out of the world by fair means, I'll pick a quarrel with him, and shoot him, on purpose that you may be a lord, as I am determined that you shall be. Now come up into my room, where we'll be all alone, and I'll tell you all about the ship and our new captain. In the first place, we'll begin with the ship, as the most important personage of the two : she's a beauty. I forget her name before she was taken, but the French

know how to build ships better than keep them. She's now called the Sanglier, which means a wild pig, and, by the powers ! a *pig* ship she is, as you will hear directly. The captain's name is a very short one, and wouldn't please Mr. Chucks, consisting only of two letters, T and O, which makes, To ; his whole title is Captain John To. It would almost appear as if somebody had broken off the better half of his name, and only left him the commencement of it ; but, however, it's a handy name to sign when he pays off his ship. And now I'll tell you what sort of a looking craft he is. He's built like a Dutch schuyt, great breadth of beam, and very square tuck. He applied to have the quarter galleries enlarged in the two last ships he commanded. He weighs about eighteen stone, rather more than less. He is a good-natured sort of a chap, amazingly ungenteel, not much of an officer, not much of a sailor, but a devilish good hand at the trencher. But he's only a part of the concern ; he has his wife on board, who is a red-herring sort of a lady, and very troublesome to boot. What makes her still more annoying is, that she has a *piano* on board, very much out of *tune*, on which she plays very much out of *time*. Holy-

stoning is music compared with her playing. Even the captain's spaniel howls when she comes to the high notes; but she affects the fine lady, and always treats the officers with music when they dine in the cabin, which makes them very glad to get out of it."

"But, O'Brien, I thought wives were not permitted on board."

"Very true, but there's the worst part in the man's character: he knows that he is not allowed to take his wife to sea, and, in consequence, he never says she *is* his wife, or presents her on shore to anybody. If any of the other captains ask how Mrs. To is to-day, 'Why,' he replies, 'pretty well, I thank you:' but at the same time he gives a kind of smirk, as if to say, 'She is not my wife;' and although everybody knows that she is, yet he prefers that they should think otherwise, rather than be at the expense of keeping her on shore; for you know, Peter, that although there are regulations about wives, there are none with regard to other women."

"But does his wife know this?" inquired I.

"I believe, from my heart, she is a party to the whole transaction, for report says, that she would skin a flint if she could. She's always

trying for presents from the officers, and, in fact, she commands the ship."

"Really, O'Brien, this is not a very pleasant prospect."

"Whist! wait a little; now I come to the wind-up. This Captain To is very partial to pig's *mate*, and we have as many live pigs on board as we have pigs of ballast. The first lieutenant is right mad about them. At the same time he allows no pigs but his own on board, that there may be no confusion. The manger is full of pigs: there are two cow-pens between the main-deck guns, drawn from the dock-yard, and converted into pig-pens. The two sheep-pens amidships are full of pigs, and the geese and turkey-coops are divided off into apartments for four *sows* in the *family way*. Now, Peter, you see there's little or no expense in keeping pigs on board of a large frigate, with so much *pay-soup* and whole peas for them to eat, and this is the reason why he keeps them, for the devil a bit of any other stock has he on board. I presume he means to *milk* one of the *old sows* for breakfast when the ship sails. The first thing that he does in the morning, is to go round to his pigs with the butcher, feeling one, scratching the dirty ears

of another, and then he classes them—his *bacon* pigs, his *porkers*, his *breeding* sows, and so on. The old boar is still at the stables of this inn, but I hear he is to come on board with the sailing orders; but he is very savage, and is therefore left on shore to the very last moment. Now really, Peter, what with the squealing of the pigs and his wife's piano we are almost driven mad. I don't know which is the worse of the two; if you go aft you hear the one, if you go forward you hear the other, by way of variety, and that, they say, is charming. But, is it not shocking that such a beautiful frigate should be turned into a pig-sty, and that her main-deck should smell worse than a muck-heap?"

"But how does his wife like the idea of living only upon hog's flesh?"

"She! Lord bless you, Peter! why, she looks as spare as a shark, and she has just the appetite of one; for she'll *bolt* a four-pound piece of pork before it's well put on her plate."

"Have you any more such pleasant intelligence to communicate, O'Brien?"

"No, Peter; you have the worst of it. The lieutenants are good officers, and pleasant mess-mates; the doctor is a little queer, and the

purser thinks himself a wag; the master, an old north-countryman, who knows his duty, and takes his glass of grog. The midshipmen are a very genteel set of young men, and full of fun and frolic. I'll bet a wager there'll be a bobbery in the pig-sty before long, for they are ripe for mischief. Now, Peter, I hardly need say that my cabin and everything I have is at your service; and I think if we could only have a devil of a gale of wind, or a hard-fought action, to send the *pigs* overboard and smash the *piano*, we should do very well."

The next day I went on board, and was shown down into the cabin, to report my having joined. Mrs. To, a tall thin woman, was at her piano; she rose, and asked me several questions—who my friends were—how much they allowed me a-year, and many other questions, which I thought impertinent: but a captain's wife is allowed to take liberties. She then asked me if I was fond of music? That was a difficult question, as, if I said that I was, I should in all probability be obliged to hear it; if I said that I was not, I might have created a dislike in her. So I replied, that I was very fond of music on shore, when it was not interrupted by other noise. "Ah!

then I perceive you are a real amateur, Mr. Simple," replied the lady.

Captain To then came out of the after-cabin, half-dressed. "Well, youngster, so you've joined at last. Come and dine with us to-day: and, as you go down to your berth, desire the sentry to pass the word for the butcher; I want to speak with him."

I bowed and retired. I was met in the most friendly manner by the officers and by my own messmates, who had been prepossessed in my favour by O'Brien, previous to my arrival. In our service you always find young men of the best families on board large frigates, they being considered the most eligible class of vessels; I found my messmates to be gentlemen, with one or two exceptions, but I never met so many wild young lads together. I sat down and ate some dinner with them, although I was to dine in the cabin, for the sea air made me hungry.

"Don't you dine in the cabin, Simple?" said the caterer.

"Yes," replied I.

"Then don't eat any pork, my boy, now, for you'll have plenty there. Come, gentlemen,

fill your glasses; we'll drink happiness to our new messmate, and pledging him, we pledge ourselves to try to promote it."

"I'll just join you in that toast," said O'Brien, walking into the midshipman's berth. "What is it you're drinking it in?"

"Some of Collier's port, sir. Boy, bring a glass for Mr. O'Brien."

"Here's your health, Peter, and wishing you may keep out of a French prison this cruise. Mr. Montague, as caterer, I beg you will order another candle, that I may see what's on the table, and then perhaps I may find something I should like to pick a bit off."

"Here's the fag end of a leg of mutton, Mr. O'Brien, and there's a piece of boiled pork."

"Then I'll just trouble you for a bit close to the knuckle. Peter, you dine in the cabin, so do I – the doctor refused."

"Have you heard when we sail, Mr. O'Brien?" inquired one of my messmates.

"I heard at the admiral's office, that we were expected to be ordered round to Plymouth, and receive our orders there, either for the East or West Indies, they thought; and, indeed, the stores we have taken on board in-

dicare that we are going foreign, but the captain's signal is just made, and probably the admiral has intelligence to communicate."

In about an hour afterwards, the captain returned, looking very red and hot. He called the first lieutenant aside from the rest of the officers, who were on deck to receive him, and told him, that we were to start for Plymouth the next morning; and the admiral had told him confidentially, that we were to proceed to the West Indies with a convoy, which was then collecting. He appeared to be very much alarmed at the idea of going to make a feast for the land-crabs; and certainly, his gross habit of body rendered him very unfit for the climate. This news was soon spread through the ship, and there was of course no little bustle and preparation. The doctor, who had refused to dine in the cabin, upon plea of being unwell, sent up to say, that he felt himself so much better, that he should have great pleasure in attending the summons, and he joined the first lieutenant, O'Brien, and me, as we walked in. We sat down to table; the covers were removed, and, as the midshipmen prophesied, there was plenty of *pork*—mock-turtle soup, made out of a pig's head—a boiled leg of pork

and peas-pudding—a roast sparerib, with the crackling on—sausages and potatoes, and pig’s pettitoes. I cannot say that I disliked my dinner, and I ate very heartily; but a roast sucking-pig came on as a second course, which rather surprised me: but what surprised me more, was the quantity devoured by Mrs. To. She handed her plate from the boiled pork to the roast, asked for some pettitoes, tried the sausages, and finished with a whole plateful of sucking-pig and stuffing. We had an apple pie at the end, but as we had already eaten apple-sauce with the roast pork, we did not care for it. The doctor, who abominated pork, ate pretty well, and was excessively attentive to Mrs. To.

“Will you not take a piece of the roast pig, doctor?” said the captain.

“Why really, Captain To, as we are bound, by all reports, to a station where we must not venture upon pork, I think I will not refuse to take a piece, for I am very fond of it.”

“How do you mean?” inquired the captain and his lady, both in a breath.

“Perhaps I may be wrongly informed,” replied the doctor; “but I have heard that we were ordered to the West Indies; now, if so,

every one knows, that although you may eat salt pork there occasionally without danger, in all tropical climates, and especially the West Indies, two or three days' living upon this meat will immediately produce dysentery, which is always fatal in that climate."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the captain.

"You don't say so!" rejoined the lady.

"I do indeed: and have always avoided the West Indies for that very reason—I am so fond of pork."

The doctor then proceeded to give nearly one hundred instances of messmates and shipmen who had been attacked with dysentery, from the eating of fresh pork in the West Indies; and O'Brien, perceiving the doctor's drift, joined him, telling some most astonishing accounts of the dreadful effects of pork in a hot country. I think he said, that when the French were blockaded, previous to the surrender of Martinique, that, having nothing but pigs to eat, thirteen hundred out of seventeen hundred soldiers and officers died in the course of three weeks, and the others were so reduced to disease, that they were obliged to capitulate. The doctor then changed the subject, and talked about the yellow fever, and other diseases of

the climate; so that by his account, the West India islands were but hospitals to die in. Those most likely to be attacked, were men in full strong health. The spare men stood a better chance. This conversation was carried on until it was time to leave—Mrs. To at last quite silent, and the captain gulping down his wine with a sigh. When we rose from table, Mrs. To did not ask us, as usual, to stay and hear a little music; she was, like her piano, not a little out of tune.

“By the powers, doctor, you did that nately,” said O’Brien, as we left the cabin.

“O’Brien,” said the doctor, “oblige me, and you, Mr. Simple, oblige me also, by not saying a word in the ship about what I have said; if it once gets wind, I shall have done no good; but if you both hold your tongues for a short time, I think I may promise you to get rid of Captain To, his wife, and his pigs.” We perceived the justice of his observation, and promised secrecy. The next morning the ship sailed for Plymouth, and Mrs. To sent for the doctor, not being very well. The doctor prescribed for her, and I believe, on my conscience, made her worse on purpose. The illness of his wife, and his own fears, brought

Captain To more than usual in contact with the doctor, of whom he frequently asked his candid opinion, as to his own chance in a hot country.

“Captain To,” said the doctor, “I never would have given my opinion, if you had not asked it, for I am aware, that, as an officer, you would never flinch from your duty, to whatever quarter of the globe you may be ordered; but, as you have asked the question, I must say, with your full habit of body, I think you would not stand a chance of living for more than two months. At the same time, sir, I may be mistaken; but, at all events, I must point out that Mrs. To is of a very bilious habit, and I trust you will not do such an injustice to an amiable woman, as to permit her to accompany you.”

“Thanky, doctor, I’m much obliged to you,” replied the captain, turning round and going down the ladder to his cabin. We were then beating down the channel; for, although we ran through the Needles with a fair wind, it fell calm, and shifted to the westward, when we were abreast of Portland. The next day the captain gave an order for a very fine pig to be killed, for he was out of provisions. Mrs. To

still kept her bed, and he therefore directed that a part should be salted, as he could have no company. I was in the midshipman's berth, when some of them proposed that we should get possession of the pig; and the plan they agreed upon was as follows—they were to go to the pen that night, and with a needle stuck in a piece of wood, to prick the pig all over, and then rub gunpowder into the parts wounded. This was done, and although the butcher was up a dozen times during the night to ascertain what made the pigs so uneasy, the midshipmen passed the needle from watch to watch, until the pig was well tattooed in all parts. In the morning watch it was killed, and when it had been scalded in the tub, and the hair taken off, it appeared covered with blue spots. The midshipman of the morning watch, who was on the main-deck, took care to point out to the butcher, that the pork was *measly*, to which the man unwillingly assented, stating, at the same time, that he could not imagine how it could be, for a finer pig he had never put a knife into. The circumstance was reported to the captain, who was much astonished. The doctor came in to visit Mrs. To, and the captain requested the doctor to examine the pig, and give his opinion.

Although this was not the doctor's province, yet, as he had great reason for keeping intimate with the captain, he immediately consented. Going forward, he met me, and I told him the secret. "That will do," replied he; "it all tends to what we wish." The doctor returned to the captain, and said, "that there was no doubt but that the pig was measly, which was a complaint very frequent on board ships, particularly in hot climates, where all pork became *measly*—one great reason for its there proving so unwholesome." The captain sent for the first lieutenant, and, with a deep sigh, ordered him to throw the pig overboard; but the first lieutenant, who knew what had been done from O'Brien, ordered the *master's mate* to throw it overboard: the master's mate, touching his hat, said, "Ay, ay, sir," and took it down into the berth, where we cut it up, salted one half, and the other we finished before we arrived at Plymouth, which was six days from the time we left Portsmouth. On our arrival, we found part of the convoy lying there, but no orders for us; and, to my great delight, on the following day the *Diomedé* arrived, from a cruise off the Western Islands. I obtained permission to

go on board with O'Brien, and we once more greeted our messmates. Mr. Falcon, the first lieutenant, went down to Captain Savage, to say we were on board, and he requested us to come into the cabin. He greeted us warmly, and gave us great credit for the manner in which we had effected our escape. When we left the cabin, I found Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, waiting outside.

“ My dear Mr. Simple, extend your flapper to me, for I'm delighted to see you. I long to have a long talk with you.”

“ And I should like it also, Mr. Chucks, but I'm afraid we have not time ; I dine with Captain Savage to-day, and it only wants an hour of dinner-time.”

“ Well, Mr. Simple, I've been looking at your frigate, and she's a beauty—much larger than the Diomedé.”

“ And she behaves quite as well,” replied I. “ I think we are two hundred tons larger. You've no idea of her size until you are on her decks.”

“ I should like to be boatswain of her, Mr. Simple ; that is, with Captain Savage, for I will not part with him.” I had some more con-

versation with Mr. Chucks, but I was obliged to attend to others, who interrupted us. We had a very pleasant dinner with our old captain, to whom we gave a history of our adventures, and then we returned on board.

CHAPTER VIII.

We get rid of the pigs and piano-forte—The last boat on shore before sailing—The first lieutenant too hasty, and the consequences to me.

WE waited three days, at the expiration of which, we heard that Captain To was about to exchange with Captain Savage. We could not believe such good news to be true, and we could not ascertain the truth of the report, as the captain had gone on shore with Mrs. To, who recovered fast after she was out of our doctor's hands; so fast, indeed, that a week afterwards, on questioning the steward, upon his return on board, how Mrs. To was, he replied, "O charming well again, sir, she has eaten a *whole pig* since she left the ship." But the report was true; Captain To, afraid to go to the West Indies, had effected an exchange with Captain

Savage. Captain Savage was permitted, as was the custom of the service, to bring his first lieutenant, his boatswain, and his barge's crew with him. He joined a day or two before we sailed, and never was there more joy on board: the only people miserable were the first lieutenant, and those belonging to the Sanglier, who were obliged to follow Captain To; who, with his wife, his pigs, and her piano, were all got rid of in the course of one forenoon.

I have already described pay-day on board of a man-of-war, but I think, that the two days before sailing are even more unpleasant; although, generally speaking, all our money being spent, we are not sorry when we once are fairly out of harbour, and find ourselves in *blue water*. The men never work well on those days: they are thinking of their wives and sweethearts, of the pleasure they had when at liberty on shore, where they might get drunk without punishment; and many of them are either half drunk at the time, or suffering from the effects of previous intoxication. The ship is in disorder, and crowded with the variety of stock and spare stores which are obliged to be taken on board in a hurry, and

have not yet been properly secured in their places. The first lieutenant is cross, the officers are grave, and the poor midshipmen, with all their own little comforts to attend to, are harassed and driven about like post-horses. "Mr. Simple," inquired the first lieutenant, "where do you come from?"

"From the gun wharf, sir, with the gunner's spare blocks, and breechings."

"Very well—send the marines aft to clear the boat, and pipe away the first cutter. Mr. Simple, jump into the first cutter and go to Mount Wise for the officers. Be careful that none of your men leave the boat. Come, be smart."

Now, I had been away the whole morning, and it was then half-past one, and I had had no dinner: but I said nothing, and went into the boat. As soon as I was off, O'Brien, who stood by Mr. Falcon, said, "Peter was thinking of his dinner, poor fellow!"

"I really quite forgot it," replied the first lieutenant, "there is so much to do. He is a willing boy, and he shall dine in the gun-room when he comes back." And so I did—so I lost nothing by not expostulating, and gained more of the favour of the first lieutenant, who never

forgot what he called *zeal*. But the hardest trial of the whole is to the midshipman who is sent with the boat to purchase the supplies for the cabin and gun-room on the day before the ship's sailing. It was my misfortune to be ordered upon that service this time, and that very unexpectedly. I had been ordered to dress myself to take the gig on shore for the captain's orders, and was walking the deck with my very best uniform and side arms, when the marine officer, who was the gun-room caterer, came up to the first lieutenant, and asked him for a boat. The boat was manned, and a midshipman ordered to take charge of it; but when he came up, the first lieutenant recollecting that he had come off two days before with only half his boat's crew, would not trust him, and called out to me, "Here, Mr. Simple, I must send you in this boat; mind you are careful that none of the men leave it; and bring off the sergeant of marines, who is on shore looking for the men who have broken their liberty." Although I could not but feel proud of the compliment, yet I did not much like going in my very best uniform, and would have run down and changed it, but the marine officer and all the people were in the boat, and I could not

keep it waiting, so down the side I went, and we shoved off. We had, besides the boat's crew, the marine officer, the purser, the gun-room steward, the captain's steward, and the purser's steward; so that we were pretty full. It blew hard from the S. E., and there was a sea running, but as the tide was flowing into the harbour there was not much bubble. We hoisted the foresail, flew before the wind and tide, and in a quarter of an hour we were at Mutton Cove, when the marine officer expressed his wish to land. The landing place was crowded with boats, and it was not without sundry exchanges of foul words and oaths, and the bow men dashing the points of their boat-hooks into the shore-boats, to make them keep clear of us, that we forced our way to the beach. The marine officer and all the stewards then left the boat, and I had to look after the men. I had not been there three minutes before the bow man said that his wife was on the wharf with his clothes from the wash, and begged leave to go and fetch them. I refused, telling him that she could bring them to him. "Vy, now, Mr. Simple," said the woman, "arn't you a nice lady's man, to go for to axe me to muddle my way through all the dead dogs, cabbage-

stalks, and stinking Hake's heads, with my bran new shoes and clean stockings?" I looked at her, and sure enough she was, as they say in France, *bien chaussée*. "Come, Mr. Simple, let him out to come for his clothes, and you'll see that he's back in a moment." I did not like to refuse her, as it was very dirty and wet, and the shingle was strewed with all that she had mentioned. The bow man made a spring out with his boat-hook, threw it back, went up to his wife, and commenced talking with her, while I watched him, "If you please, sir, there's my young woman come down, mayn't I speak to her?" said another of the men. I turned round and refused him. He expostulated, and begged very hard, but I was resolute; however, when I again turned my eyes to watch the bow man, he and his wife were gone. "There," says I to the coxswain, "I knew it would be so; you see Hickman is off."

"Only gone to take a parting glass, sir," replied the coxswain; "he'll be here directly."

"I hope so; but I'm afraid not." After this, I refused all the solicitations of the men to be allowed to leave the boat, but I permitted them to have some beer brought down to them.

The gun-room steward then came back with a basket of *soft-tack*, *i. e.* loaves of bread, and told me that the marine officer requested I would allow two of the men to go up with him to Glencross' shop, to bring down some of the stores. Of course, I sent two of the men, and told the steward if he saw Hickman, to bring him down to the boat.

By this time many of the women belonging to the ship had assembled, and commenced a noisy conversation with the boat's crew. One brought one article for Jim, another some clothes for Bill; some of them climbed into the boat, and sat with the men—others came and went, bringing beer and tobacco, which the men desired them to purchase. The crowd, the noise, and confusion, were so great, that it was with the utmost difficulty that I could keep my eyes on all my men, who, one after another, made an attempt to leave the boat. Just at that time came down the sergeant of marines, with three of our men whom he had picked up, *roaring drunk*. They were tumbled into the boat, and increased the difficulty, as in looking after those who were riotous, and would try to leave the boat by force, I was not so well able to keep my eyes on those who were sober. The sergeant

then went up after another man, and I told him also about Hickman. About half an hour afterwards the steward came down with the two men, loaded with cabbages, baskets of eggs, strings of onions, crockery of all descriptions, paper parcels of groceries, legs and shoulders of mutton, which were crowded in, until not only the stern-sheets, but all under the thwarts of the boat were also crammed full. They told me that they had a few more things to bring down, and that the marine officer had gone to Stonehouse to see his wife, so that they should be down long before him. In half an hour more, during which I had the greatest difficulty to manage the boat's crew, they returned with a dozen geese, and two ducks, tied by the legs, but without the two men, who had given them the slip, so that there were now three men gone, and I knew Mr. Falcon would be very angry, for they were three of the smartest men in the ship. I was now determined not to run the risk of losing more men, and I ordered the boat's crew to shove off, that I might lie at the wharf, where they could not climb up. They were very mutinous, grumbled very much, and would hardly obey me; the fact is, they had drunk a great deal, and some of them were more

than half tipsy. However, at last I was obeyed, but not without being saluted with a shower of invectives from the women, and the execrations of the men belonging to the wherries and *shore-boats* which were washed against our sides by the swell. The weather had become much worse, and looked very threatening. I waited an hour more, when the sergeant of marines came down with two more men, one of whom, to my great joy, was Hickman. This made me more comfortable, as I was not answerable for the other two ; still I was in great trouble from the riotous and insolent behaviour of the boat's crew, and the other men brought down by the sergeant of marines. One of them fell back into a basket of eggs, and smashed them all to atoms ; still the marine officer did not come down, and it was getting late. The tide being now at the ebb, running out against the wind, there was a very heavy sea, and I had to go off to the ship with a boat deeply laden, and most of the people in her in a state of intoxication. The coxswain, who was the only one who was sober, recommended our shoving off, as it would soon be dark, and some accident would happen. I reflected a minute, and agreeing with him, I ordered the oars to be got out,

and we shoved off, the sergeant of marines and the gun-room steward perched up in the bows—drunken men, ducks and geese, lying together at the bottom of the boat—the stern sheets loaded up to the gunwale, and the other passengers and myself sitting how we could among the crockery and a variety of other articles with which the boat was crowded. It was a scene of much confusion—the half-drunken boat's crew *catching crabs*, and falling forward upon the others—those who were quite drunk swearing they *would* pull. “Lay on your oar, Sullivan; you are doing more harm than good. You drunken rascal, I'll report you as soon as we get on board.”

“How the devil can I pull, your honour, when there's that fellow Jones breaking the very back o' me with his oar, and he never touching the water all the while?”

“You lie,” cried Jones; “I'm pulling the boat by myself against the whole of the larboard oars.”

“He's rowing *dry*, your honour—only making bilave.”

“Do you call this rowing *dry*?” cried another, as a sea swept over the boat, fore and aft, wetting everybody to the skin.

“Now your honour, just look and see if I a’n’t pulling the very arms off me?” cried Sullivan.

“Is there water enough to cross the Bridge, Swinburne?” said I to the coxswain.

“Plenty, Mr. Simple; it is but quarter ebb, and the sooner we are on board the better.”

We were now past Devil’s Point, and the sea was very heavy: the boat plunged in the trough, so that I was afraid that she would break her back. She was soon half full of water, and the two after oars were laid in for the men to bale. “Plase your honour, hadn’t I better cut free the legs of them ducks and geese, and allow them to swim for their lives?” cried Sullivan, resting on his oar; “the poor birds will be drowned else in their own *iliment*.”

“No, no—pull away as hard as you can.”

By this time the drunken men in the bottom of the boat began to be very uneasy, from the quantity of water which washed about them, and made several staggering attempts to get on their legs. They fell down again upon the ducks and geese, the major part of which were saved from being drowned by being suffocated. The sea on the Bridge was very heavy: and although the tide swept us out, we were nearly

swamped. Soft bread was washing about the bottom of the boat; the parcels of sugar, pepper, and salt, were wet through with the salt water, and a sudden jerk threw the captain's steward, who was seated upon the gunwale close to the after-oar, right upon the whole of the crockery and eggs, which added to the mass of destruction. A few more seas shipped completed the job, and the gun-room steward was in despair. "That's a darling!" cried Sullivan: "the politest boat in the whole fleet. She make more bows and curtseys than the finest couple in the land. Give way, my lads, and work the crater stuff out of your elbows, and the first lieutenant will see us all so sober, and so wet in the bargain, and think we're all so dry, that perhaps he'll be after giving us a raw nip when we get on board."

In a quarter of an hour we were nearly alongside, but the men pulled so badly, and the sea was so great, that we missed the ship, and went astern. They veered out a buoy with a line, which we got hold of, and were hauled up by the marines and after-guard, the boat plunging bows under, and drenching us through and through. At last we got under the counter, and I climbed up by the stern ladder. Mr. Falcon

was on deck, and very angry at the boat not coming alongside properly. "I thought, Mr. Simple, that you knew by this time how to bring a boat alongside."

"So I do, sir, I hope," replied I; "but the boat was so full of water, and the men would not give way."

"What men has the sergeant brought on board?"

"Three, sir," replied I, shivering with the cold, and unhappy at my very best uniform being spoiled.

"Are all your boat's crew with you, sir?"

"No, sir, there are two left on shore; they——"

"Not a word, sir. Up to the mast-head, and stay there till I call you down. If it were not so late, I would send you on shore, and not receive you on board again without the men. Up, sir, immediately."

I did not venture to explain, but up I went. It was very cold, blowing hard from the S.E., with heavy squalls; I was so wet, that the wind appeared to blow through me, and it was now nearly dark. I reached the cross-trees, and when I was seated there, I felt that I had done my duty, and had not been fairly treated.

During this time, the boat had been hauled up alongside to clear, and a pretty clearance there was. All the ducks and geese were dead, the eggs and crockery all broke, the grocery almost all washed away; in short, as O'Brien observed, there was "a very pretty general average." Mr. Falcon was still very angry; "Who are the men missing?" inquired he, of Swinburne, the coxswain, as he came up the side.

"Williams and Sweetman, sir."

"Two of the smartest topmen, I am told. It really is too provoking; there is not a midshipman in the ship I can trust. I must work all day, and get no assistance. The service is really going to the devil now, with the young men who are sent on board to be brought up as officers, and who are above doing their duty. What made you so late, Swinburne?"

"Waiting for the marine officer, who went to Stonehouse to see his wife; but Mr. Simple would not wait any longer, as it was getting dark, and we had so many drunken men in the boat."

"Mr. Simple did right. I wish Mr. Harrison would stay on shore with his wife altogether—it's really trifling with the service. Pray, Mr. Swinburne, why had not you your eyes about

you, if Mr. Simple was so careless? How came you to allow these men to leave the boat?"

"The men were ordered up by the marine officer, to bring down your stores, sir, and they gave the steward the slip. It was no fault of Mr. Simple's, nor of mine either. We laid off at the wharf for two hours before we started, or we should have lost more; for what can a poor lad do, when he has charge of drunken men who *will not* obey orders?" And the coxswain looked up at the mast-head, as much as to say, Why is he sent there? "I'll take my oath, sir," continued Swinburne, "that Mr. Simple never put his foot out of the boat, from the time that he went over the side until he came on board; and that no young gentleman could have done his duty more strictly."

Mr. Falcon looked very angry at first, at the coxswain speaking so freely, but he said nothing. He took one or two turns on the deck, and then hailing the mast-head, desired me to come down. But I *could not*; my limbs were so cramped with the wind blowing upon my wet clothes, that I could not move. He hailed again; I heard him, but was not able to answer. One of the topmen then came up, and perceiving my condition, hailed the deck, and said he believed

I was dying, for I could not move, and that he dared not leave me for fear I should fall. O'Brien, who had been on deck all the while, jumped up the rigging, and was soon at the cross-trees where I was. He sent the top man down into the top for a tail-block and the studding-sail haulyards, made a whip, and lowered me on deck. I was immediately put into my hammock; and the surgeon ordering me some hot brandy-and-water, and plenty of blankets, in a few hours I was quite restored.

O'Brien, who was at my bedside, said, "Never mind, Peter, and don't be angry with Mr. Falcon, for he is very sorry."

"I am not angry, O'Brien; for Mr. Falcon has been too kind to me not to make me forgive him for being once hasty."

The surgeon came to my hammock, gave me some more hot drink, desired me to go to sleep, and I woke the next morning quite well.

When I came into the berth, my messmates asked me how I was, and many of them railed against the tyranny of Mr. Falcon; but I took his part, saying, that he was hasty in this instance, perhaps, but that, generally speaking, he was an excellent and very just officer. Some agreed with me, but others did not. One of

them, who was always in disgrace, sneered at me, and said, "Peter reads the Bible, and knows that if you smite one cheek, he must offer the other. Now, I'll answer for it, if I pull his right ear, he will offer me his left." So saying, he lugged me by the ear, upon which I knocked him down for his trouble. The berth was then cleared away for a fight, and in a quarter of an hour my opponent gave in; but I suffered a little, and had a very black eye. I had hardly time to wash myself and change my shirt, which was bloody, when I was summoned on the quarter-deck. When I arrived, I found Mr. Falcon walking up and down. He looked very hard at me, but did not ask me any questions as to the cause of my unusual appearance.

"Mr. Simple," said he, "I sent for you to beg your pardon for my behaviour to you last night, which was not only very hasty but very unjust. I find that you were not to blame for the loss of the men."

I felt very sorry for him when I heard him speak so handsomely; and, to make his mind more easy, I told him that, although I certainly was not to blame for the loss of those two men, still I had done wrong in permitting Hickman to leave the boat; and that had not

the serjeant picked him up, I should have come off without him, and therefore I *did* deserve the punishment which I had received.

“ Mr. Simple,” replied Mr. Falcon, “ I respect you, and admire your feelings: still, I was to blame, and it is my duty to apologize. Now go down below. I would have requested the pleasure of your company to dinner, but I perceive that something else has occurred, which, under any other circumstances, I would have inquired into, but at present I shall not.”

I touched my hat and went below. In the meantime, O'Brien had been made acquainted with the occasion of the quarrel, which he did not fail to explain to Mr. Falcon, who, O'Brien declared, “ was not the least bit in the world angry with me for what had occurred.” Indeed, after that, Mr. Falcon always treated me with the greatest kindness, and employed me on every duty which he considered of consequence. He was a sincere friend; for he did not allow me to neglect my duty, but, at the same time, treated me with consideration and confidence.

The marine officer came on board very angry at being left behind, and talked about a court-martial on me for disrespect, and neglect of stores entrusted to my charge; but O'Brien

told me not to mind him, or what he said, "It's my opinion, Peter, that the gentleman has eaten no small quantity of *flapdoodle* in his lifetime."

"What's that, O'Brien?" replied I; "I never heard of it."

"Why, Peter," rejoined he, "it's the stuff they *feed fools on*."

CHAPTER IX.

A long conversation with Mr. Chucks—The advantage of having a prayer-book in your pocket—We run down the Trades—Swinburne, the quarter-master, and his yarns—The captain falls sick.

THE next day the captain came on board with sealed orders, with directions not to open them until off Ushant. In the afternoon, we weighed and made sail. It was a fine northerly wind, and the Bay of Biscay was smooth. We bore up, set all the studding-sails, and ran along at the rate of eleven miles an hour. As I could not appear on the quarter-deck, I was put down on the sick-list. Captain Savage, who was very particular, asked what was the matter with me. The surgeon replied, "An inflamed eye." The captain asked no more questions; and I took care to keep out of his way. I walked in the evening on the forecastle, when I renewed my inti-

macy with Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, to whom I gave a full narrative of all my adventures in France. "I have been ruminating, Mr. Simple," said he, "how such a stripling as you could have gone through so much fatigue, and now I know how it is. It is *blood*, Mr. Simple—all blood—you are descended from good blood; and there's as much difference between nobility and the lower classes, as there is between a racer and a cart-horse."

"I cannot agree with you, Mr. Chucks. Common people are quite as brave as those who are well-born. You do not mean to say that you are not brave—that the seamen on board this ship are not brave?"

"No, no, Mr. Simple; but as I observed about myself, my mother was a woman who could not be trusted, and there is no saying who was my father; and she was a very pretty woman to boot, which levels all distinctions for the moment. As for the seamen, God knows, I should do them an injustice if I did not acknowledge that they were as brave as lions. But there are two kinds of bravery, Mr. Simple,—the bravery of the moment, and the courage of bearing up for a long while. Do you understand me?"

“ I think I do ; but still do not agree with you. Who will bear more fatigue than our sailors ? ”

“ Yes, yes, Mr. Simple, that is because they are *endured* to it from their hard life : but if the common sailors were all such little thread-papers as you, and had been brought up so carefully, they would not have gone through all you have. That’s my opinion, Mr. Simple,—there’s nothing like *blood*.”

“ I think, Mr. Chucks, you carry your ideas on that subject too far.”

“ I do not, Mr. Simple ; and I think, moreover, that he who has more to lose than another will always strive more. Now a common man only fights for his own credit ; but when a man is descended from a long line of people famous in history, and has a coat *in* arms, criss-crossed, and stuck all over with lions and unicorns to support the dignity of—why, has he not to fight for the credit of all his ancestors, whose names would be disgraced if he didn’t behave well ? ”

“ I agree with you, Mr. Chucks, in the latter remark, to a certain extent.”

“ Ah ! Mr. Simple, we never know the value of good descent when we have it, but it’s when

we cannot get it, that we can 'preciate it. I wish I had been born a nobleman—I do, by heavens!" and Mr. Chucks slapped his fist against the funnel, so as to make it ring again. "Well, Mr. Simple," continued he, after a pause, "it is however a great comfort to me that I have parted company with that fool, Mr. Muddle, with his twenty-six thousand and odd years, and that old woman, Dispart, the gunner. You don't know how those two men used to fret me; it was very silly, but I couldn't help it. Now the warrant officers of this ship appear to be very respectable, quiet men, who know their duty, and attend to it, and are not too familiar, which I hate and detest. You went home to your friends, of course, when you arrived in England?"

"I did, Mr. Chucks, and spent some days with my grandfather, Lord Privilege, whom you say you once met at dinner."

"Well, and how was the old gentleman?" inquired the boatswain with a sigh.

"Very well, considering his age."

"Now do, pray, Mr. Simple, tell me all about it; from the time that the servants met you at the door until you went away. Describe

to me the house and all the rooms, for I like to hear of all these things, although I can never see them again."

To please Mr. Chucks, I entered into a full detail, which he listened to very attentively, until it was late, and then, with difficulty would he permit me to leave off, and go down to my hammock.

The next day, rather a singular circumstance occurred. One of the midshipmen was mast-headed by the second lieutenant, for not waiting on deck until he was relieved. He was down below when he was sent for, and expecting to be punished from what the quartermaster told him, he thrust the first book into his jacket-pocket which he could lay his hand on, to amuse himself at the mast-head, and then ran on deck. As he surmised, he was immediately ordered aloft. He had not been there more than five minutes, when a sudden squall carried away the main-top-gallant mast, and away he went flying over to leeward, (for the wind had shifted, and the yards were now braced up.) Had he gone overboard, as he could not swim, he would in all probability have been drowned; but the book in his pocket brought him up in the jaws of the fore-brace

block, where he hung until taken out by the main-topmen. Now it so happened that it was a prayer-book which he had laid hold of in his hurry, and those who were superstitious declared it was all owing to his having taken a religious book with him. I did not think so, as any other book would have answered the purpose quite as well: still the midshipman himself thought so, and it was productive of good, as he was a sad scamp, and behaved much better afterwards.

But I had nearly forgotten to mention a circumstance which occurred on the day of our sailing, which will be eventually found to have had a great influence upon my after life. It was this. I received a letter from my father, evidently written in great vexation and annoyance, informing me that my uncle, whose wife I have already mentioned had two daughters, and was again expected to be confined, had suddenly broken up his housekeeping, discharged every servant, and proceeded to Ireland under an assumed name. No reason had been given for this unaccountable proceeding; and not even my grandfather, or any of the members of the family, had had notice of his intention. Indeed, it was by mere accident that his departure was

discovered, about a fortnight after it had taken place. My father had taken a great deal of pains to find out where he was residing; but although my uncle was traced to Cork, from that town all clue was lost, but still it was supposed, from inquiries, that he was not very far from thence. "Now," observed my father, in his letter, "I cannot help surmising, that my brother, in his anxiety to retain the advantages of the title to his own family, has resolved to produce to the world a spurious child as his own, by some contrivance or another. His wife's health is very bad, and she is not likely to have a large family. Should the one now expected prove a daughter, there is little chance of his ever having another; and I have no hesitation in declaring it my conviction that the measure has been taken with a view of defrauding you of your chance of eventually being called to the House of Lords."

I showed this letter to O'Brien, who, after reading it over two or three times, gave his opinion that my father was right in his conjectures. "Depend upon it, Peter, there's foul play intended, that is, if foul play is rendered necessary."

"But, O'Brien, I cannot imagine why, if my

uncle has no son of his own, he should prefer acknowledging a son of any other person's instead of his own nephew."

"But I can, Peter: your uncle is not a man likely to live very long, as you know. The doctor says that with his short neck, his life is not worth two years' purchase. Now if he had a son, consider that his daughters would be much better off, and much more likely to get married; besides, there are many reasons which I won't talk about now, because it's no use making you think your uncle to be a scoundrel. But I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll go down to my cabin directly, and write to Father M'Grath, telling him the whole affair, and desiring him to ferret him out, and watch him narrowly, and I'll bet you a dozen of claret, that in less than a week, he'll find him out, and will dog him to the last. He'll get hold of his Irish servants, and you little know the power that a priest has in our country. Now give the description as well as you can of your uncle's appearance, also of that of his wife, and the number of their family, and their ages. Father M'Grath must have all particulars, and then let him alone for doing what is needful."

I complied with O'Brien's directions as well as I could, and he wrote a very long letter to Father M'Grath, which was sent on shore by a careful hand. I answered my father's letter, and then thought no more about the matter.

Our sealed orders were opened, and proved our destination to be the West Indies, as we expected. We touched at Madeira to take in some wine for the ship's company; but as we only remained one day, we were not permitted to go on shore. Fortunate indeed would it have been if we had never gone there; for the day after, our captain, who had dined with the consul, was taken alarmingly ill. From the symptoms, the surgeon dreaded that he had been poisoned by something which he had eaten, and which most probably had been cooked in a copper vessel not properly tinned. We were all very anxious that he should recover; but, on the contrary, he appeared to grow worse and worse every day, wasting away, and dying, as they say, by inches. At last he was put in his cot, and never rose from it again. This melancholy circumstance, added to the knowledge that we were proceeding to an unhealthy climate, caused a gloom throughout the ship; and, although the trade wind carried us along bound-

ing over the bright blue sea—although the weather was now warm, yet not too warm—although the sun rose in splendour, and all was beautiful and cheering, the state of the captain's health was a check to all mirth. Every one trod the deck softly, and spoke in a low voice, that he might not be disturbed; all were anxious to have the morning report of the surgeon, and our conversation was generally upon the sickly climate, the yellow fever, of death, and the palisades where they buried us. Swinburne, the quarter-master, was in my watch, and as he had been long in the West Indies, I used to obtain all the information from him that I could.

The old fellow had a secret pleasure in frightening me as much as he could. “Really, Mr. Simple, you ax so many questions,” he would say, as I accosted him while he was at his station at the *conn*, “I wish you wouldn’t ax so many questions, and make yourself uncomfortable—‘steady so’—‘steady it is;’ with regard to Yellow Jack, as we calls the yellow fever, it’s a devil incarnate, that’s sartain—you’re well and able to take your allowance in the morning, and dead as a herring ’fore night. First comes a bit of a headache—you goes to

the doctor, who bleeds you like a pig—then you go out of your senses—then up comes the black vomit, and then it's all over with you, and you go to the land crabs, who pick your bones as clean and as white as a sea elephant's tooth. But there be one thing to be said in favour of Yellow Jack, a'ter all. You dies *straight*, like a gentleman—not cribbled up like a snow-fish, chucked out on the ice of the river St. Lawrence, with your knees up to your nose, or your toes stuck into your arm-pits, as does take place in some of your foreign complaints; but straight, quite straight, and limber, like a *gentleman*. Still Jack is a little mischievous, that's sartain. In the Euridiscy we had as fine a ship's company as was ever piped aloft,—‘Steady, starboard, my man, you're half a pint off your course;’—we dropped our anchor in Port Royal, and we thought that there was mischief brewing, for thirty-eight sharks followed the ship into the harbour, and played about us day and night. I used to watch them during the night watch, as their fins, above water, skimmed along, leaving a trail of light behind them; and the second night I said to the sentry abaft, as I was looking at them smelling under the counter—‘Soldier,’ says I, ‘them sharks are mustering

under the orders of Yellow Jack ;' and I no sooner mentioned Yellow Jack, than the sharks gave a frisky plunge, every one of them, as much as to say, ' Yes, so we are, d—n your eyes.' The soldier was so frightened that he would have fallen overboard, if I hadn't caught him by the scruff of the neck, for he was standing on the top of the taffrail. As it was, he dropped his musket over the stern, which the sharks dashed at from every quarter, making the sea look like fire—and he had it charged to his wages, 1*l.* 16*s.* I think. However, the fate of his musket gave him an idea of what would have happened to him, if he had fallen in instead of it—and he never got on the taffrail again. ' Steady, port—mind your helm, Smith—you can listen to my yarn all the same.' Well, Mr. Simple, Yellow Jack came, sure enough. First the purser was called to account for all his roguery. We didn't care much about the land-crabs eating him, who had made so many poor dead men chew tobacco, cheating their wives and relations, or Greenwich Hospital, as it might happen. Then went two of the mid-dies, just about your age, Mr. Simple: they, poor fellows, went off in a sad hurry; then went the master—and so it went on, till at last

we had no more nor sixty men left in the ship. The captain died last, and then Yellow Jack had filled his maw, and left the rest of us alone. As soon as the captain died, all the sharks left the ship, and we never saw any more of them."

Such were the yarns told to me and the other midsh'pmen during the night watches; and I can assure the reader, that they gave us no small alarm. Every day that we worked our day's work, and found ourselves so much nearer to the islands, did we feel as if we were so much nearer to our graves. I once spoke to O'Brien about it, and he laughed. "Peter," says he, "fear kills more people than the yellow fever, or any other complaint in the West Indies. Swinburne is an old rogue, and only laughing at you. The devil's not half so black as he's painted—nor the yellow fever half so yellow, I presume." We were now fast nearing the island of Barbadoes, the weather was beautiful, the wind always fair; the flying-fish rose in shoals, startled by the foaming seas, which rolled away, and roared from the bows as our swift frigate cleaved through the water; the porpoises played about us in thousands—the bonetas and dolphins at one time chased the

flying fish, and, at others, appeared to be delighted in keeping company with the rapid vessel. Everything was beautiful, and we all should have been happy, had it not been for the state of Captain Savage, in the first place, who daily became worse and worse, and from the dread of the hell which we were about to enter through such a watery paradise. Mr. Falcon, who was in command, was grave and thoughtful; he appeared indeed to be quite miserable at the chance which would ensure his own promotion. In every attention and every care that could be taken to ensure quiet, and afford relief to the captain, he was unremitting; the offence of making a noise was now, with him, a greater crime than drunkenness, or even mutiny. When within three days' sail of Barbadoes, it fell almost calm, and the captain became much worse; and now, for the first time, did we behold the great white shark of the Atlantic. There are several kinds of sharks, but the most dangerous are the great white shark and the ground shark. The former grows to an enormous length—the latter is seldom very long, not more than twelve feet, but spreads to a great breadth. We could not hook the sharks as they played around us, for Mr.

Falcon would not permit it, lest the noise of hauling them on board should disturb the captain. A breeze again sprang up. In two days we were close to the island, and the men were desired to look out for the land.

CHAPTER X.

Death of Captain Savage—His funeral—Specimen of true Barbadian born—Sucking the monkey—Effects of a hurricane.

THE next morning, having hove-to part of the night, land was discovered on the bow, and was reported by the mast-head man at the same moment that the surgeon came up and announced the death of our noble captain. Although it had been expected for the last two or three days, the intelligence created a heavy gloom throughout the ship; the men worked in silence, and spoke to one another in whispers. Mr. Falcon was deeply affected, and so were we all. In the course of the morning, we ran into the island, and, unhappy as I was, I never can forget the sensation of admiration which I felt on closing with Needham

Point to enter Carlisle Bay. The beach of such a pure dazzling white, backed by the tall, green cocoa-nut trees, waving their spreading heads to the fresh breeze, the dark blue of the sky, and the deeper blue of the transparent sea, occasionally varied into green as we passed by the coral rocks which threw their branches out from the bottom—the town opening to our view by degrees, houses after houses so neat, with their green jalousies, dotting the landscape, the fort with the colours flying, troops of officers riding down, a busy population of all colours, relieved by the whiteness of their dress. Altogether the scene realized my first ideas of fairy land, for I thought I had never witnessed anything so beautiful. “And can this be such a dreadful place as it is described?” thought I. The sails were clewed up, the anchor was dropped to the bottom, and a salute from the ship, answered by the forts, added to the effect of the scene. The sails were furled, the boats lowered down, the boatswain squared the yards from the jolly-boat a-head. Mr. Falcon dressed, and his boat being manned, went on shore with the despatches. Then, as soon as the work was over, a new scene of delight presented itself to the sight of

midshipmen who had been so long upon his Majesty's allowance. These were the boats, which crowded round the ship, loaded with baskets of bananas, oranges, shaddocks, scur-sops, and every other kind of tropical fruit, fried flying fish, eggs, fowls, milk, and everything which could tempt a poor boy after a long sea voyage. The watch being called, down we all hastened into the boats, and returned loaded with treasures, which we soon contrived to make disappear. After stowing away as much fruit as would have sufficed for a dessert to a dinner given to twenty people in England, I returned on deck.

There was no other man-of-war in the bay; but my attention was directed to a beautiful little vessel, a schooner, whose fairy form contrasted strongly with a West India trader which lay close to her. All of a sudden, as I was looking at her beautiful outline, a yell rose from her which quite startled me, and immediately afterwards her deck was covered with nearly two hundred naked figures with woolly heads, chattering and grinning at each other. She was a Spanish slaver, which had been captured, and had arrived the evening before. The slaves were still on board, waiting the orders of

the governor. They had been on deck about ten minutes, when three or four men, with large panama straw hats on their heads, and long rattans in their hands, jumped upon the gunnel, and in a few seconds drove them all down below. I then turned round, and observed a black woman who had just climbed up the side of the frigate. O'Brien was on deck, and she walked up to him in the most consequential manner.

"How do you do, sar? Very happy you come back again," said she to O'Brien.

"I'm very well, I thank you, ma'am," replied O'Brien, "and I hope to go back the same; but never having put my foot into this bay before, you have the advantage of me."

"Nebber here before, so help me Gad! me tink I know you—me tink I recollect your handsome face—I Lady Rodney, sar. Ah, piccaninny buccra! how you do?" said she, turning round to me. "Me hope to hab the honour to wash for you, sar," curtsyng to O'Brien.

"What do you charge in this place?"

"All the same price, one bit a piece."

"What do you call a bit?" inquired I.

"A bit, lilly massa?—what you call um *bit*? Dem four *sharp shins* to a pictareen."

Our deck was now enlivened by several

army officers, besides gentlemen residents, who came off to hear the news. Invitations to the mess and to the houses of the gentlemen, followed, and as they departed, Mr. Falcon returned on board. He told O'Brien and the other officers, that the admiral and squadron were expected in a few days, and that we were to remain in Carlisle Bay, and refit immediately.

But although the fright about the yellow fever had considerably subsided in our breasts, the remembrance that our poor captain was lying dead in the cabin was constantly obtruding. All that night the carpenters were up making his coffin, for he was to be buried the next day. The body is never allowed to remain many hours unburied in the tropical climates, where putrefaction is so rapid. The following morning the men were up at daylight, washing the decks and putting the ship in order; they worked willingly, and yet with a silent decorum which showed what their feelings were. Never were the decks better cleaned, never were the ropes more carefully *flemished* down; the hammocks were stowed in their white cloths, the yards carefully squared, and the ropes hauled taut. At eight o'clock the

colours and pennant were hoisted half-mast high. The men were then ordered down to breakfast, and to clean themselves. During the time that the men were at breakfast, all the officers went into the cabin to take a last farewell look at our gallant captain. He appeared to have died without pain, and there was a beautiful tranquillity in his face; but even already a change had taken place, and we perceived the necessity of his being buried so soon. We saw him placed in his coffin, and then quitted the cabin without speaking to each other. When the coffin was nailed down, it was brought up by the barge's crew to the quarter-deck, and laid upon the gratings amidships, covered over with the Union Jack. The men came up from below without waiting for the pipe, and a solemnity appeared to pervade every motion. Order and quiet were universal, out of respect to the deceased. When the boats were ordered to be manned, the men almost appeared to steal into them. The barge received the coffin, which was placed in the stern sheets. The other boats then hauled up, and received the officers, marines, and sailors, who were to follow the procession. When all was ready, the barge was shoved off by the bowmen, the crew dropped their oars

into the water without a splash, and pulled the *minute stroke* ; the other boats followed, and as soon as they were clear of the ship, the minute guns boomed along the smooth surface of the bay from the opposite side of the ship, while the yards were topped to starboard and to port, the ropes were slackened and hung in bights, so as to give the idea of distress and neglect. At the same time, a dozen or more of the men who had been ready, dropped over the sides of the ship in different parts, and with their cans of paint and brushes in a few minutes effaced the whole of the broad white riband which marked the beautiful run of the frigate, and left her all black and in deep mourning. The guns from the forts now responded to our own. The merchant ships lowered their colours, and the men stood up respectfully with their hats off, as the procession moved slowly to the landing-place. The coffin was borne to the burial-ground by the crew of the barge, followed by Mr. Falcon as chief mourner, all the officers of the ship who could be spared, one hundred of the seamen walking two and two, and the marines with their arms reversed. The *cortége* was joined by the army officers, while the troops lined the streets and the bands played

the dead march. The service was read, the vollies were fired over the grave, and with oppressed feelings we returned to the boats and pulled on board.

It then appeared to me, and to a certain degree I was correct, that as soon as we had paid our last respect to his remains, we had also forgotten our grief. The yards were again squared, the ropes hauled taut, working dresses resumed, and all was activity and bustle. The fact is, that sailors and soldiers have no time for lamentation, and running as they do from clime to clime, so does scene follow scene in the same variety and quickness. In a day or two, the captain appeared to be, although he was not, forgotten. Our first business was to *water* the ship by rafting and towing off the casks. I was in charge of the boat again, with Swinburne as coxswain. As we pulled in, there were a number of negroes bathing in the surf, bobbing their woolly heads under it, as it rolled into the beach. "Now, Mr. Simple," said Swinburne, "see how I'll make them *niggers* scamper." He then stood up in the stern sheets, and pointing with his finger, roared out, "A shark! a shark!" Away started all the bathers for the beach, puffing and blowing, from their dreaded

enemy; nor did they stop to look for him until they were high and dry out of his reach. Then, when we all laughed, they called us "*all the hangman tiefs*," and every other opprobrious name which they could select from their vocabulary. I was very much amused with this scene, and as much afterwards with the negroes who crowded round us when we landed. They appeared such merry fellows, always laughing, chattering, singing, and showing their white teeth. One fellow danced round us, snapping his fingers, and singing songs without beginning or end. "Eh massa, what you say now? Me no slave—true Barbadian born, sir. Eh!

"Nebba see de day
Dat Rodney run away,
Nebba see um night
Dat Rodney cannot fight.

"Massa, me free man, sar. Suppose you give me pictareen, drink massa health.

"Nebba see de day boy,
Pompey lickum de Cæsar.

"Eh! and you nebba see de day dat de Grasshopper run on de Warrington."

"Out of the way, you nigger!" cried one of the men who was rolling down a cask.

“ Eh ! who you call nigger ? Me free man,
and true Barbadian born. Go along, you man-
of-war man.

“ Man-of-war, buccra,
Man-of-war, buccra,
He de boy for me ;
Sodger buccra,
Sodger buccra,
Nebba, nebba do,
Nebba, nebba do for me ;
Sodger give one shilling,
Sailor give me two.

“ Massa, now suppose you give me only one
pictareen now. You really handsome young
gentleman.”

“ Now, just walk off,” said Swinburne, lifting
up a stick he found on the beach.

“ Eh ; walk off.

“ Nebba see the day, boy,
'Badian run away, boy.

“ Go, do your work, sar. Why you talk to
me ? Go, work, sar. I free man, and real
Barbadian born.

“ Negro on de shore
See de ship come in,

De buccra come on shore,
Wid de hand up to the chin ;
Man-of-war buccra,
Man-of-war buccra,
He de boy for me,
Man-of-war, buccra,
Man-of-war, buccra,
Gib pictareen to me."

At this moment my attention was directed to another negro, who lay on the beach, rolling and foaming at the mouth, apparently in a fit. "What's the matter with that fellow?" said I to the same negro who continued close to me, notwithstanding Swinburne's stick. "Eh ! call him Sam Slack, Massa. He ab um *tic tic* fit." And such was apparently the case. "Stop, me cure him ;" and he snatched the stick out of Swinburne's hand, and running up to the man, who continued to roll on the beach, commenced belabouring him without mercy. "Eh, Sambo !" cried he at last, quite out of breath, "you no better yet—try again." He recommenced, until at last the man got up and ran away as fast as he could. Now, whether the man was shamming, or whether it was real *tic tic*, or epileptic fit, I know not, but I never heard of such a cure for it before. I threw the fellow half a

pictareen, as much for the amusement he had afforded me as to get rid of him. "Tanky, massa; now man-of-war man, here de tick for you again to keep off all de dam niggers." So saying, he handed the stick to Swinburne, made a polite bow, and departed. We were, however, soon surrounded by others, particularly some dingy ladies, with baskets of fruit, and who, as they said, "sell ebery ting." I perceived that my sailors were very fond of cocoa-nut milk, which, being a harmless beverage, I did not object to their purchasing from these ladies, who had chiefly cocoa-nuts in their baskets. As I had never tasted it, I asked them what it was, and bought a cocoa-nut. I selected the largest. "No, massa, dat not good for you. Better one for buccra officer." I then selected another, but the same objection was made. "No, massa, dis very fine milk. Very good for de tomac." I drank off the milk from the holes on the top of the cocoa-nut, and found it very refreshing. As for the sailors, they appeared very fond of it indeed. But I very soon found that if good for de tomac, it was not very good for the head, as my men, instead of rolling the casks, began to roll themselves in all directions, and when it was time to

go off to dinner, most of them were dead drunk at the bottom of the boat. They insisted that it was the *sun* which affected them. Very hot it certainly was, and I believed them at first, when they were only giddy; but I was convinced to the contrary when I found that they became insensible; yet how they had procured the liquor was to me a mystery. When I came on board, Mr. Falcon, who, although acting captain, continued his duties as first lieutenant almost as punctually as before, asked how it was that I had allowed my men to get so tipsy. I assured him that I could not tell, that I had never allowed one to leave the watering-place, or to buy any liquor: the only thing that they had to drink was a little cocoa-nut milk, which, as it was so very hot, I thought there could be no objection to. Mr. Falcon smiled and said, "Mr. Simple, I'm an old stager in the West Indies, and I'll let you into a secret. Do you know what '*sucking the monkey*' means?" "No, sir." "Well, then, I'll tell you; it is a term used among seamen for drinking *rum* out of *cocoa-nuts*, the milk having been poured out, and the liquor substituted. Now do you comprehend why your men are tipsy?" I stared with all my eyes, for it never would have en-

tered into my head; and I then perceived why it was that the black woman would not give me the first cocoa-nuts which I selected. I told Mr. Falcon of this circumstance, who replied, "Well, it was not your fault, only you must not forget it another time."

It was my first watch that night, and Swinburne was quarter-master on deck. "Swinburne," said I, "you have often been in the West Indies before, why did you not tell me that the men were '*sucking the monkey*' when I thought that they were only drinking cocoa-nut milk?"

Swinburne chuckled, and answered, "Why, Mr. Simple, d'ye see, it didn't become me as a shipmate to peach. It's but seldom that a poor fellow has an opportunity of making himself a 'little happy,' and it would not be fair to take away the chance. I suppose you'll never let them have cocoa-nut milk again?"

"No, that I will not; but I cannot imagine what pleasure they can find in getting so tipsy."

"It's merely because they are not allowed to be so, sir. That's the whole story in few words."

"Well, I think I could cure them, if I were permitted to try."

“ I should like to hear how you'd manage that, Mr. Simple.”

“ Why, I would oblige a man to drink off a half pint of liquor, and then put him by himself. I would not allow him companions to make merry with so as to make a pleasure of intoxication. I would then wait until next morning when he was sober, and leave him alone with a racking headache until the evening, when I would give him another dose, and so on, forcing him to get drunk until he hated the smell of liquor.”

“ Well, Mr. Simple, it might do with some, but many of our chaps would require the dose you mention to be repeated pretty often before it would effect a cure : and what's more, they'd be very willing patients, and make no wry faces at their physic.”

“ Well, that might be, but it would cure them at last. But tell me, Swinburne, were you ever in a hurricane ?”

“ I've been in everything, Mr. Simple, I believe, except a school, and I never had no time to go there. Do you see that battery at Needham Point ? Well, in the hurricane of '82, them same guns were whirled away by the wind right over to this point here on the opposite side, the

sentries in their sentry-boxes after them. Some of the soldiers who faced the wind had their teeth blown down their throats like broken 'baccy pipes, others had their heads turned round like dog vanes; 'cause they waited for orders to the '*right about face*,' and the whole air was full of young *niggers* blowing about like peelings of *ingons*."

"You don't suppose I believe all this, Swinburne?"

"That's as may be, Mr. Simple, but I've told the story so often, that I believe it myself."

"What ship were you in?"

"In the *Blanche*, Captain Faulkner, who was as fine a fellow as poor Captain Savage whom we buried yesterday; there could not be a finer than either of them. I was at the taking of the *Pique*, and carried him down below after he had received his mortal wound. We did a pretty thing out here when we took Fort Royal by a *coup-de-main*, which means, boarding from the *main-yard* of the frigate, and dropping from it into the fort. But what's that under the moon?—there's a sail in the offing."

Swinburne fetched the glass and directed it

to the spot. "One, two, three, four. It's the admiral, sir, and the squadron hove-to for the night. One's a line-of-battle ship, I'll swear." I examined the vessels, and agreeing with Swinburne, reported them to Mr. Falcon. My watch was then over, and as soon as I was released I went to my hammock.

CHAPTER XI.

Captain Kearney—The Dignity Ball.

THE next morning at daylight, we exchanged numbers, and saluted the flag, and by eight o'clock they all anchored. Mr. Falcon went on board the admiral's ship with despatches, and to report the death of Captain Savage. In about half an hour he returned, and, we were glad to perceive, with a smile upon his face, from which we argued that he would receive his acting order as commander, which was a question of some doubt, as the admiral had the power to give the vacancy to whom he pleased, although it would not have been fair if he had not given it to Mr. Falcon; not that Mr. Falcon would not have received his commission, as Captain Savage dying when the ship was under no

admiral's command, he *made himself*; but still the admiral might have sent him home, and not have given him a ship. But this he did, the captain of the *Minerve* being appointed to the *Sanglier*, the captain of the *Opossum* to the *Minerve*, and Captain Falcon taking the command of the *Opossum*. He received his commission that evening, and the next day the exchanges were made. Captain Falcon would have taken me with him, and offered so to do; but I could not leave O'Brien, so I preferred remaining in the *Sanglier*.

We were all anxious to know what sort of a person our new captain was, whose name was Kearney; but we had no time to ask the midshipmen, except when they came in charge of the boats which brought his luggage; they replied generally, that he was a very good sort of fellow, and there was no harm in him. But when I had the night watch with Swinburne, he came up to me, and said, "Well, Mr. Simple, so we have a new captain. I sailed with him for two years in a brig."

"And pray, Swinburne, what sort of a person is he?"

"Why, I'll tell you, Mr. Simple: he's a good-tempered, kind fellow enough, but——"

“ But what ? ”

“ Such a *bouncer* ! ! ”

“ How do you mean ? He’s not a very stout man.”

“ Bless you, Mr. Simple, why you don’t understand English. I mean that he’s the greatest liar that ever walked a deck. Now, Mr. Simple, you know I can spin a yarn occasionally.”

“ Yes, that you can ; witness the hurricane the other night.”

“ Well, Mr. Simple, I cannot *hold a candle* to him. It a’n’t that I might not stretch now and then, just for fun, as far as he can, but, d—n it, he’s always on the stretch. In fact, Mr. Simple, he never tells the truth except *by mistake*. He’s as poor as a rat, and has nothing but his pay ; yet to believe him, he is worth at least as much as Greenwich Hospital. But you’ll soon find him out, and he’ll sarve to laugh at behind his back you know, Mr. Simple, for that’s *no go* before his face.”

Captain Kearney made his appearance on board the next day. The men were mustered to receive him, and all the officers were on the quarter-deck. “ You’ve a fine set of marines here, Captain Falcon,” observed he ; “ those I

left on board of the *Minerve* were only fit to be *hung*; and you have a good show of reefers too—those I left in the *Minerve* were not *worth hanging*. If you please I'll read my commission if you'll order the men aft." His commission was read, all hands with their hats off from respect to the authority from which it proceeded. "Now, my lads," said Captain Kearney addressing the ship's company, "I've but few words to say to you. I am appointed to command this ship, and you appear to have a very good character from your late first lieutenant. All I request of you is this: be smart, keep sober, and always *tell the truth*—that's enough. Pipe down. Gentlemen," continued he, addressing the officers, "I trust that we shall be good friends; and I see no reason that it should be otherwise." He then turned away with a bow, and called his coxswain, "Williams, you'll go on board and tell my steward that I have promised to dine with the governor to-day, and that he must come to dress me; and, coxswain, recollect to put the sheepskin mat on the stern gratings of my gig—not the one I used to have when I was on shore in my *carriage*, but the blue one which was used for the *chariot*—you know which I mean." I

happened to look Swinburne in the face, who cocked his eye at me, as much as to say—“There he goes.” We afterwards met the officers of the *Minerve*, who corroborated all that Swinburne had said, although it was quite unnecessary, as we had the captain’s own words every minute to satisfy us of the fact.

Dinner parties were now very numerous, and the hospitality of the island is but too well known. The invitations extended to the midshipmen, and many was the good dinner and kind reception which I had during my stay. There was, however, one thing I had heard so much of, that I was anxious to witness it, which was a *dignity ball*. But I must enter a little into explanation, or my readers will not understand me. The coloured people of Barbadoes, for reasons best known to themselves, are immoderately proud, and look upon all the negroes who are born on other islands as *niggers*; they have also an extraordinary idea of their own bravery, although I never heard that it has ever been put to the proof. The free Barbadians are, most of them, very rich, and hold up their heads as they walk with an air quite ridiculous. They ape the manners of the Europeans, at the same time that they ap-

pear to consider them as almost their inferiors. Now, a *dignity* ball is a ball given by the most consequential of their coloured people, and from the amusement and various other reasons, is generally well attended by the officers both on shore and afloat. The price of the tickets of admission was high—I think they were half a joe, or eight dollars each.

The governor sent out cards for a grand ball and supper for the ensuing week, and Miss Betsy Austin, a quadroon woman, ascertaining the fact, sent out her cards for the same evening. This was not altogether in *rivalry*, but for another reason, which was, that she was aware that most of the officers and midshipmen of the ships would obtain permission to go to the governor's ball, and preferring her's, would slip away and join the party, by which means she ensured a full attendance.

On the day of invitation our captain came on board, and told our new first lieutenant (of whom I shall say more hereafter) that the governor insisted that all *his* officers should go—that he would take no denial, and therefore, he presumed, go they must; that the fact was, that the governor was a *relation* of his wife, and under some trifling obligations to him in ob-

taining for him his present command. He certainly had spoken to the *prime minister*, and he thought it not impossible, considering the intimate terms which the minister and he had been on from childhood, that his solicitation might have had some effect; at all events, it was pleasant to find that there was some little gratitude left in this world. After this, of course, every officer went, with the exception of the master, who said that he'd as soon have two round turns in his hawse, as go to see people kick their legs about like fools, and that he'd take care of the ship.

The governor's ball was very splendid, but the ladies were rather sallow, from the effects of the climate. However, there were exceptions, and on the whole it was a very gay affair; but we were all anxious to go to the *dignity* ball of Miss Betsy Austin. I slipped away with three other midshipmen, and we soon arrived there. A crowd of negroes were outside of the house, but the ball had not yet commenced, from the want of gentlemen, the ball being very correct, nothing under mulatto in colour being admitted. Perhaps I ought to say here, that the progeny of a white and a negro is a mulatto, or half and half—of a white and mulatto, a

quadroon, or one quarter black, and of this class the company were chiefly composed. I believe a quadroon and white make the *mustee* or one eighth black, and the mustee and white, the *mustafina*, or one-sixteenth black. After that, they are *white washed*, and considered as Europeans. The pride of colour is very great in the West Indies, and they have as many quarterings as a German prince in his coat of arms; a quadroon looks down upon a mulatto, while a mulatto looks down upon a *sambo*, that is, half mulatto half negro, while a sambo in his turn looks down upon a *nigger*. The quadroons are certainly the handsomest race of the whole, some of the women are really beautiful; their hair is long and perfectly straight, their eyes large and black, their figures perfection, and you can see the colour mantle in their cheeks quite as plainly, and with as much effect, as in those of a European. We found the door of Miss Austin's house open, and ornamented with orange branches, and on our presenting ourselves were accosted by a mulatto gentleman, who was, we presumed, "usher of the black rod." His head was well powdered, he was dressed in white jean trowsers, a waistcoat not six inches long, and a half-worn post-captain's

coat on, as a livery. With a low bow, he “took de liberty to trouble de gentlemen for de card for de ball,” which being produced, we were ushered on by him to the ball-room, at the door of which Miss Austin was waiting to receive her company. She made us a low curtsy, observing, “She really happy to see de *gentlemen* of de ship, but hoped to see de *officers* also at her *dignity*.”

This remark touched our *dignity*, and one of my companions replied “that we midshipmen considered ourselves officers, and no *small* ones either, and that if she waited for the lieutenants she must wait until they were tired of the governor’s ball, we having given the preference to her’s.”

This remark set all to rights; sangaree was handed about, and I looked around at the company. I must acknowledge, at the risk of losing the good opinion of my fair countrywomen, that I never saw before so many pretty figures and faces. The *officers* not having yet arrived, we received all the attention, and I was successively presented to Miss Eurydice, Miss Minerva, Miss Sylvia, Miss Aspasia, Miss Euterpe, and many others, evidently borrowed from the different men-of-war which had been on

the station. All these young ladies gave themselves all the airs of Almack's. Their dresses I cannot pretend to describe—jewels of value were not wanting, but their drapery was slight. They appeared neither to wear or to require stays, and on the whole, their figures were so perfect, that they could only be ill-dressed by having on too much dress. A few more midshipmen and some lieutenants, (O'Brien among the number,) having made their appearance, Miss Austin directed that the ball should commence. I requested the honour of Miss Eurydice's hand in a cotillon, which was to open the ball. At this moment stepped forth the premier violin, master of the ceremonies and ballet-master, Massa Johnson, really a very smart man, who gave lessons in dancing to all the "Badian ladies." He was a dark quadroon, his hair slightly powdered, dressed in a light blue coat thrown well back, to show his lily-white waistcoat, only one button of which he could afford to button to make full room for the pride of his heart, the frill of his shirt, which really was *un jabot superb*, four inches wide, and extending from his collar to the waistband of his nankeen tights, which were finished off at his knees with huge bunches of ribbon;

his legs were encased in silk stockings, which, however, was not very good taste on his part, as they showed the manifest advantage which an European has over a coloured man in the formation of the leg: instead of being straight, his shins curved like a cheese-knife, and, moreover, his leg was planted into his foot like the handle into a broom or scrubbing-brush, there being quite as much of the foot on the heel side as on the toe side. Such was the appearance of Mr. Apollo Johnson, whom the ladies considered as the *ne plus ultra* of fashion, and the *arbiter elegantiarum*. His *bow-tick*, or fiddle-stick, was his wand, whose magic rap on the fiddle produced immediate obedience to his mandates. "Ladies and gentle, take your seats." All started up. "Miss Eurydice, you open de ball."

Miss Eurydice had but a sorry partner, but she undertook to instruct me. O'Brien was our *vis-à-vis* with Miss Euterpe. The other gentlemen were officers from the ships, and we stoop up twelve, chequered brown and white, like a chess-board. All eyes were fixed upon Mr. Apollo Johnson, who first looked at the couples, then at his fiddle, and, lastly, at the other musicians, to see if all was right, and

then with a wave of his *bow-tick* the music began. "Massa lieutenant," cried Apollo to O'Brien, "cross over to opposite lady, right hand and left, den figure to Miss Eurydice—dat right; now four hand round. You lily midshipman, set your partner, sir; den twist her round; dat do, now stop. First figure all over."

At this time I thought I might venture to talk a little with my partner, and I ventured a remark. To my surprise, she answered very sharply, "I come here for dance, sar, and not for chatter; look Massa Johnson, he tap um bow-tick."

The second figure commenced, and I made a sad bungle; so I did of the third and fourth, and fifth, for I never had danced a cotillon. When I handed my partner to her place, who certainly was the prettiest girl in the room, she looked rather contemptuously at me, and observed to a neighbour, "I really pity de gentleman as come from England dat no know how to dance, nor nothing at all, until em hab instruction at Barbadoes."

A country dance was now called for, which was more acceptable to all parties, as none of Mr. Apollo Johnson's pupils were very perfect



PETER AND O'BRIEN AT A DIGNITY BALL.

in their cotillon, and none of the officers, except O'Brien, knew any thing about them. O'Brien's superior education on this point, added to his lieutenant's epaulet and handsome person, made him much courted; but he took up with Miss Eurydice after I had left her, and remained with her the whole evening; thereby exciting the jealousy of Mr. Apollo Johnson, who, it appears, was amorous in that direction. Our party increased every minute: all the officers of the garrison, and, finally, as soon as they could get away, the governor's aide-de-camps, all dressed in *mufti*, (*i. e.* plain clothes.) The dancing continued until three o'clock in the morning, when it was quite a squeeze, from the constant arrival of fresh recruits from all the houses in Barbadoes. I must say, that a few bottles of Eau de Cologne thrown about the room would have improved the atmosphere. By this time the heat was terrible, and the *mopping* of the ladies' faces everlasting. I would recommend a DIGNITY ball to all stout gentlemen, who wish to be reduced a stone or two. Supper was now announced, and having danced the last country dance with Miss Minerva, I of course had the pleasure of handing her into the supper-room. It was my fate to

sit opposite to a fine turkey, and I asked my partner if I should have the pleasure of helping her to a piece of the breast. She looked at me very indignantly, and said, "Curse your impudence, sar, I wonder where you larn manners. Sar, I take a lily turkey *bosom*, if you please. Talk of *breast* to a lady, sar!—really quite *horrid*." I made two or three more barbarous mistakes before the supper was finished. At last the eating was over, and I must say a better supper I never sat down to. "Silence, gentlemen and ladies," cried Mr. Apollo Johnson, "wid de permission of our amiable hostess, I will purpose a toast. Gentlement and ladies—You all know, and if be so you don't, I say that there no place in de world like Barbadoes. All de world fight against England, but England nebber fear; King George nebber fear, while *Barbadoes 'tand 'tiff*. 'Badian fight for King George to last drop of him blood. Nebber see the day 'Badian run away; you all know dem Frenchmans at San Lucee, give up Morne Fortunée, when he hear de 'Badian volunteer come against him. I hope no 'fence present company, but um sorry to say English come here too jealous of 'Badians. Gentlemen and lady—Barbadian born ab only one fault—

he *really too brave*. I purpose health of 'Island of Barbadoes.' " Acclamations from all quarters followed this truly modest speech, and the toast was drunk with rapture; the ladies were delighted with Mr. Apollo's eloquence, and the lead which he took in the company.

O'Brien then rose and addressed the company as follows:—"Ladies and gentlemen—Mr. Poll has spoken better than the best parrot I ever met with in this country; but as he has thought proper to drink the 'Island of Barbadoes,' I mean to be a little more particular. I wish, with him, all good health to the island; but there is a charm without which the island would be a desert—that is, the society of the lovely girls who now surround us, and take our hearts by storm,—(here, O'Brien put his arm gently round Miss Eurydice's waist, and Mr. Apollo ground his teeth so as to be heard at the furthest end of the room,)—therefore, gentlemen, with your permission, I will propose the health of the 'Badian Ladies.' " This speech of O'Brien's was declared, by the females at least, to be infinitely superior to Mr. Apollo Johnson's. Miss Eurydice was even more

gracious, and the other ladies were more envious.

Many other toasts and much more wine was drunk, until the male part of the company appeared to be rather riotous. Mr. Apollo, however, had to regain his superiority, and after some hems and hahs, begged permission to give a sentiment. "Gentlemen and ladies, I beg then to say—

"Here's to de cock who make lub to de hen,
Crow till he hoarse, and make lub again."

This *sentiment* was received with rapture, and after silence was obtained, Miss Betsy Austin rose and said—"Unaccustomed as she was to public 'peaking, she must not sit 'till and not tank de gentleman for his very fine toast, and in de name of de ladies she begged leave to propose another sentimen, which was—

"Here to de hen what nebber refuses,
Let cock pay compliment whenebber he chooses."

If the first toast was received with applause, this was with enthusiasm; but we received a damper after it was subsided, by the lady of the house getting up and saying—"Now, gen-

tlemen and ladies, me tink it right to say dat it time to go home; I nebber allow people get drunk or kick up bobbery in my house, so now I tink we better take parting-glass, and very much obliged to you for your company."

As O'Brien said, this was a broad hint to be off, so we all now took our parting-glass, in compliance with her request and our own wishes, and proceeded to escort our partners on their way home. While I was assisting Miss Minerva to her red crape shawl, a storm was brewing in another quarter, to wit, between Mr. Apollo Johnson and O'Brien. O'Brien was assiduously attending to Miss Eurydice, whispering what he called soft blarney in her ear, when Mr. Apollo, who was above spirit boiling heat with jealousy, came up, and told Miss Eurydice that he would have the honour of escorting her home.

"You may save yourself the trouble, you dingy gut-scraper," replied O'Brien; "the lady is under my protection, so take your ugly black face out of the way, or I'll show you how I treat a 'Badian who is really too brave.'"

"So elp me Gad, Massa Lieutenant, 'pose you put a finger on me, I show you what 'Badian can do."

Apollo then attempted to insert himself between O'Brien and his lady, upon which O'Brien shoved him back with great violence, and continued his course towards the door. They were in the passage, when I came up, for hearing O'Brien's voice in anger, I left Miss Minerva to shift for herself.

Miss Eurydice had now left O'Brien's arm, at his request, and he and Mr. Apollo were standing in the passage, O'Brien close to the door, which was shut, and Apollo swaggering up to him. O'Brien, who knew the tender part of a black, saluted Apollo with a kick on the shins, which would have broken my leg. Massa Johnson roared with pain, and recoiled two or three paces, parting the crowd away behind him. The blacks never fight with fists, but butt with their heads like rams, and with quite as much force. When Mr. Apollo had retreated he gave his shin one more rub, uttered a loud yell, and started at O'Brien, with his head aimed at O'Brien's chest, like a battering-ram. O'Brien, who was aware of this plan of fighting, stepped dexterously on one side, and allowed Mr. Apollo to pass by him, which he did with such force, that his head went clean through the panel of the door behind O'Brien, and there

he stuck as fast as if in a pillory, squealing like a pig for assistance, and foaming with rage. After some difficulty he was released, and presented a very melancholy figure. His face was much cut, and his superb *Jabot* all in tatters; he appeared, however, to have had quite enough of it, as he retreated to the supper-room, followed by some of his admirers, without asking or looking after O'Brien.

But if Mr. Apollo had had enough of it, his friends were too indignant to allow us to go off scot-free. A large mob was collected in the street, vowing vengeance on us for our treatment of their flash man, and a row was to be expected. Miss Eurydice had escaped, so that O'Brien had his hands free. "Cam out, you hangman tiefs, cam out! only wish had rock stones, to mash your heads with," cried the mob of negroes. The officers now sallied out in a body, and were saluted with every variety of missile, such as rotten oranges, cabbage-stalks, mud, and cocoa-nut shells. We fought our way manfully, but as we neared the beach the mob increased to hundreds, and at last we could proceed no further, being completely jammed up by the niggers, upon whose heads we could make no more impression than upon blocks of

marble. "We must draw our swords," observed an officer. "No, no," replied O'Brien, "that will not do; if once we shed blood, they will never let us get on board with our lives. The boat's crew by this time must be aware that there is a row." O'Brien was right. He had hardly spoken, before a lane was observed to be made through the crowd in the distance, which in two minutes was open to us. Swinburne appeared in the middle of it, followed by the rest of the boat's crew, armed with the boats' stretchers, which they did not aim at the *heads* of the blacks, but swept them like scythes against their *shins*. This they continued to do, right and left of us, as we walked through and went down to the boats, the seamen closing up the rear with their stretchers, with which they ever and anon made a sweep at the black fellows if they approached too near. It was now broad daylight, and in a few minutes we were again safely on board the frigate. Thus ended the first and last dignity ball that I attended.

CHAPTER XII.

I am claimed by Captain Kearney as a relation—Trial of skill between first lieutenant and captain with the long bow—The shark, the pug dog, and the will—A quarter-deck picture.

As the admiral was not one who would permit the ships under his command to lie idle in port, in a very few days after the dignity ball which I have described, all the squadron sailed on their various destinations. I was not sorry to leave the bay, for one soon becomes tired of profusion, and cared nothing for either oranges, bananas, or shaddocks, nor even for the good dinners and claret at the tables of the army mess and gentlemen of the island. The sea breeze soon became more precious to us than anything else, and if we could have bathed without the fear of a shark, we should have equally appreciated that most refreshing of all luxuries under

the torrid zone. It was therefore with pleasure that we received the information that we were to sail the next day to cruise off the French island of Martinique. Captain Kearney had been so much on shore that we saw but little of him, and the ship was entirely under the control of the first lieutenant, of whom I have hitherto not spoken. He was a very short, pock-marked man, with red hair and whiskers, a good sailor, and not a bad officer; that is, he was a practical sailor, and could show any foremast man his duty in any department—and this seamen very much appreciate, as it is not very common; but I never yet knew an officer who prided himself upon his practical knowledge, who was at the same time a good navigator, and too often, by assuming the Jack Tar, they lower the respect due to them, and become coarse and vulgar in their manners and language. This was the case with Mr. Phillott, who prided himself upon his slang, and who was at one time “hail fellow well met” with the seamen, talking to them, and being answered as familiarly as if they were equals, and at another, knocking the very same men down with a handspike if he was displeased. He was not bad tempered, but very hasty; and his

language to the officers was occasionally very incorrect ; to the midshipmen invariably so. However, on the whole, he was not disliked, although he was certainly not respected as a first lieutenant should have been. It is but fair to say, that he was the same to his superiors as he was to his inferiors, and the bluntness with which he used to contradict and assert his disbelief of Captain Kearney's narratives often produced a coolness between them for some days.

The day after we sailed from Carlisle Bay I was asked to dine in the cabin. The dinner was served upon plated dishes, which looked very grand, but there was not much in them. "This plate," observed the captain, "was presented to me by some merchants for my exertions in saving their property from the Danes when I was cruising off Heligoland."

"Why, that lying steward of yours told me that you bought it at Portsmouth," replied the first lieutenant ; "I asked him in the galley this morning."

"How came you to assert such a confounded falsehood, sir?" said the captain to the man who stood behind his chair.

“ I only said that I thought so,” replied the steward.

“ Why, didn’t you say that the bill had been sent in, through you, seven or eight times, and that the captain had paid it with a flowing sheet?”

“ Did you dare say that, sir,” interrogated the captain very angrily.

“ Mr. Phillott mistook me, sir,” replied the steward. “ He was so busy damning the sweepers, that he did not hear me right. I said, the midshipmen had paid their crockery bill with the fore-topsail.”

“ Ay, ay,” replied the captain, “ that’s much more likely.”

“ Well, Mr. Steward,” replied Mr. Phillott, “ I’ll be d——d if you ar’n’t as big a liar as your”—(master, he was going to plump out, but fortunately the first lieutenant checked himself, and added,)—“ as your father was before you.”

The captain changed the conversation by asking me whether I would take a slice of ham. “ It’s real Westphalia, Mr. Simple ; I have them sent me direct by Count Troningsken, an intimate friend of mine, who kills his own wild boars in the Hartz mountains.”

“How the devil do you get them over, Captain Kearney?”

“There are ways and means of doing everything, Mr. Phillott, and the first consul is not quite so bad as he is represented. The first batch was sent over with a very handsome letter to me, written in his own hand, which I will show you some of these days. I wrote to him in return, and sent to him two Cheshire cheeses by a smuggler, and since that they came regularly. Did you ever eat Westphalia ham, Mr. Simple?”

“Yes, sir,” replied I; “once I partook of one at Lord Privilege’s.”

“Lord Privilege! why he’s a distant relation of mine, a sort of fifth cousin,” replied Captain Kearney.

“Indeed, sir!” replied I.

“Then you must allow me to introduce you to a relation, Captain Kearney,” said the first lieutenant; “for Mr. Simple is his grandson.”

“Is it possible? I can only say, Mr. Simple, that I shall be most happy to show you every attention, and am very glad that I have you as one of my officers.”

Now, although this was all false, for Captain

Kearney was not in the remotest manner connected with my family, yet, having once asserted it, he could not retract, and the consequence was, that I was much the gainer by his falsehood, as he treated me very kindly afterwards, always calling me *cousin*.

The first lieutenant smiled, and gave me a wink, when the captain had finished his speech to me, as much as to say, "You're in luck," and then the conversation changed. Captain Kearney certainly dealt in the marvellous to admiration, and really told his stories with such earnestness, that I actually believe that he thought he was telling the truth. Never was there such an instance of confirmed habit. Telling a story of a cutting-out expedition, he said, "The French captain would have fallen by my hand, but just as I levelled my musket, a ball came, and cut off the cock of the lock as clean as if it was done with a knife—a very remarkable instance," observed he.

"Not equal to what occurred in a ship I was in," replied the first lieutenant, "when the second lieutenant was grazed by a grape shot, which cut off one of his whiskers, and turning round his head to ascertain what was the matter, another grape shot came and took

off the other. Now that's what I call a *close shave*."

"Yes," replied Captain Kearney, "very close indeed, if it were true; but you'll excuse me, Mr. Phillott, but you sometimes tell strange stories. I do not mind it myself, but the example is not good to my young relation here, Mr. Simple."

"Captain Kearney," replied the first lieutenant, laughing very immoderately, "do you know what the pot called the kettle?"

"No, sir, I do not," retorted the captain, with offended dignity. "Mr. Simple, will you take a glass of wine?"

I thought that this little *brouillerie* would have checked the captain; it did so, but only for a few minutes, when he again commenced. The first lieutenant observed that it would be necessary to let water into the ship every morning, and pump it out, to avoid the smell of the bilge-water. "There are worse smells than bilge-water," replied the captain. "What do you think of a whole ship's company being nearly poisoned with otto of roses? Yet that occurred to me when in the Mediterranean. I was off Smyrna, cruising for a French ship, that was to sail to France, with a pasha on

board, as an ambassador. I knew she would be a good prize, and was looking sharp out, when one morning we discovered her on the lee bow. We made all sail, but she walked away from us, bearing away gradually till we were both before the wind, and at night we lost sight of her. As I knew that she was bound to Marseilles, I made all sail to fall in with her again. The wind was light and variable; but five days afterwards, as I lay in my cot, just before daylight, I smelt a very strong smell, blowing in at the weather port, and coming down the skylight which was open; and after sniffing at it two or three times, I knew it to be otto of roses. I sent for the officer of the watch, and asked him if there was anything in sight. He replied 'that there was not;' and I ordered him to sweep the horizon with his glass, and look well out to windward. As the wind freshened, the smell became more powerful. I ordered him to get the royal yards across, and all ready to make sail, for I knew that the Turk must be near us. At daylight, there he was, just three miles a-head in the wind's eye. But although he beat us going free, he was no match for us on a wind, and before noon we had possession of him and all his harem. By-the-bye, I could

tell you a good story about the ladies. She was a very valuable prize, and among other things, she had a *puncheon* of otto of roses on board ——”

“Whew !” cried the first lieutenant. “What ! a whole puncheon ?”

“Yes,” replied the captain, “a Turkish puncheon—not quite so large, perhaps, as ours on board ; their weights and measures are different. I took out most of the valuables into the brig I commanded—about 20,000 sequins—carpets—and among the rest, this cask of otto of roses, which we had smelt three miles off. We had it safe on board, when the mate of the hold, not slinging it properly, it fell into the spirit-room with a run, and was stove to pieces. Never was such a scene ; my first lieutenant and several men on deck fainted ; and the men in the hold were brought up lifeless : it was some time before they were recovered. We let the water into the brig, and pumped it out, but nothing would take away the smell, which was so overpowering, that before I could get to Malta I had forty men on the sick-list. When I arrived there I turned the mate out of the service for his carelessness. It was not until after having smoked the brig, and finding that

of little use, after having sunk her for three weeks, that the smell was at all bearable; but even then it could never be eradicated, and the admiral sent the brig home, and she was sold out of the service. They could do nothing with her at the dock-yards. She was broken up, and bought by the people at Brighton and Tunbridge Wells, who used her timbers for turning fancy articles, which, smelling as they did so strongly of otto of roses, proved very profitable. Were you ever at Brighton, Mr. Simple?"

"Never, sir."

Just at this moment, the officer of the watch came down to say that there was a very large shark under the counter, and wished to know if the captain had any objection to the officers attempting to catch it."

"By no means," replied Captain Kearney; "I hate sharks as I do the devil. I nearly lost 14,000*l.* by one, when I was in the Mediterranean."

"May I inquire how, Captain Kearney?" said the first lieutenant, with a demure face; "I'm very anxious to know."

"Why the story is simply this," replied the captain. "I had an old relation at Malta,

whom I found out by accident—an old maid of sixty, who had lived all her life on the island. It was by mere accident that I knew of her existence. I was walking upon Strada Reale, when I saw a large baboon that was kept there, who had a little fat pug-dog by the tail, which he was pulling away with him, while an old lady was screaming out for help; for whenever she ran to assist her dog, the baboon made at her as if he would have ravished her, and caught her by the petticoats with one hand, while he held the pug-dog fast by the other. I owed that brute a spite for having attacked me one night when I passed him, and perceiving what was going on, I drew my sword and gave Mr. Jacko such a clip, as sent him away howling and bleeding like a pig, leaving me in possession of the little pug, which I took up and handed to his mistress. The old lady trembled very much, and begged me to see her safe home. She had a very fine house, and after she was seated on the sofa, thanked me very much for my gallant assistance, as she termed it, and told me her name was Kearney; upon this, I very soon proved my relationship with her, at which she was much delighted, requesting me to consider her house as my home. I

was for two years afterwards on that station, and played my cards very well; and the old lady gave me a hint that I should be her heir, as she had no other relations that she knew any thing of. At last I was ordered home, and not wishing to leave her, I begged her to accompany me, offering her my cabin. She was taken very ill a fortnight before we sailed, and made a will, leaving me her sole heir; but she recovered, and got as fat as ever. Mr. Simple, the wine stands with you. I doubt if Lord Privilege gave you better claret than there is in that bottle: I imported it myself ten years ago, when I commanded the *Coquette*."

"Very odd," observed the first lieutenant, "we bought some at Barbadoes with the same mark on the bottles and cork."

"That may be," replied the captain; "old established houses all keep up the same marks; but I doubt if your wine can be compared to this. You have never tasted older wine, I think, Mr. Phillott."

"I beg your pardon, sir; but I can prove to you that I have, for when Noah paid off the ark, my ancestor bought his *sea stock*, and it's been handed down to my father: there may be three dozen left."

“ Really, Mr. Phillott, you are almost too facetious. Will you take some macaroni? It is one of the best things we can have at sea. I wish you had seen my kitchen at Walcot Abbey.”

“ I have no doubt but it was excellent,” replied Mr. Phillott; “ but I should have preferred eating what came from it. I wish that I had a knowledge of the art which a friend of mine has—a new science, I may say.”

“ Pray what may that be?”

“ They call it fumography.”

“ Fumography ! never heard of it.”

“ It is the art of knowing precisely, by examination of the smoke which comes out of the chimney, what your neighbour has for dinner.”

“ Upon my soul, if one could send an excuse at a late hour, that might be useful.”

“ My friend is quite an adept. He can tell first and second course *entremets*, and even if the different articles to be put on the table are done to a turn, or not.”

“ Now, Mr. Simple, what do you think of that?” inquired the captain.

“ I think, sir, that it’s all smoke.”

“ Bravo, Mr. Simple ! you’ve said a very good thing.”

So I thought, too ; but, as I wasn’t quite

sure, I would not laugh till all the rest of the company did.

As Mr. Phillott wished to hear the end of the captain's story, he would not contradict him about the wine, by stating what he knew to be the case, that the captain had sent it on board at Barbadoes; and the captain proceeded.

“ Well, I gave up my cabin to the old lady, and hung up my cot in the gun-room, during the passage home. We were becalmed abreast of Ceuta for two days. The old lady was very particular about her pug-dog, and I superintended the washing of the little brute twice a week; but at last I was tired of it, and gave him to my coxswain to bathe. My coxswain, who was a lazy fellow, without my knowledge, used to put the little beast into the bight of a rope, and tow him overboard for a minute or so. It was during this calm that he had him overboard in this way, when a confounded shark rose from under the counter, and took in the pug-dog at one mouthful. The coxswain reported the loss as a thing of no consequence; but I knew better, and put the fellow in irons. I then went down and broke the melancholy fact to Miss Kearney, stating that I had put the man in irons, and would flog

him well. The old lady broke out into a most violent passion at the intelligence, declared that it was my fault, that I was jealous of the dog, and had done it on purpose. The more I protested, the more she raved; and at last I was obliged to go on deck to avoid her abuse and keep my temper.—I had not been on deck five minutes before she came up—that is, was shoved up, for she was so heavy that she could not get up without assistance. You know how elephants in India push the cannon through a morass with their heads from behind; well, my steward used to shove her up the companion-ladder just in the same way, with his head completely buried in her petticoats. As soon as she was up, he used to pull his head out, looking as red and hot as a fresh-boiled lobster. Well, up she came, with her will in her hand, and looking at me very fiercely, she said, ‘Since the shark has taken my dear dog he may have my will also,’ and throwing it overboard, she plumped down on the carronade slide. ‘It’s very well, madam,’ said I; ‘but you’ll be cool by-and-bye, and then you’ll make another will.’ ‘I swear by all the hopes that I have of going to heaven that I never will!’ replied she. ‘Yes you will, madam,’

replied I. ‘Never, so help me God! Captain Kearney: my money may now go to my next heir, and that, you know, will not be you.’ Now, as I knew very well that the old lady was very positive, and as good as her word, my object was to recover the will, which was floating about fifty yards astern, without her knowledge. I thought a moment, and then I called the boatswain’s mate to *pipe all hands to bathe*. ‘You’ll excuse me, Miss Kearney,’ said I, ‘but the men are going to bathe, and I do not think you would like to see them all naked. If you would, you can stay on deck.’ She looked daggers at me, and rising from the carronade slide, hobbled to the ladder, saying, ‘that the insult was another proof of how little I deserved any kindness from her.’ As soon as she was below, the quarter-boats were lowered down, and I went in one of them and picked up the will, which still floated. Briggs having no stern-windows, of course she could not see my manœuvre, but thought that the will was lost for ever. We had very bad weather after that, owing to which, with the loss of her favourite pug, and constant quarrelling with me—for I did all I could to annoy her afterwards—she fell ill, and was buried a fort-

night after she was landed at Plymouth. The old lady kept her word; she never made another will. I proved the one I had recovered at Doctors' Commons, and touched the whole of her money."

As neither the first lieutenant nor I could prove whether the story was true or not, of course we expressed our congratulations at his good fortune, and soon afterwards left the cabin to report the marvellous story to our messmates. When I went on deck, I found that the shark had just been hooked, and was hauling on board. Mr. Phillott had also come on deck. The officers were all eager about the shark, and were looking over the side, calling to each other, and giving directions to the men. Now, although certainly there was a want of decorum on the quarter-deck, still, the captain having given permission, it was to be excused, but Mr. Phillott thought otherwise, and commenced in his usual style, beginning with the marine officer.

"Mr. Westley, I'll trouble you not to be getting upon the hammocks. You'll get off directly, sir. If one of your fellows were to do so, I'd stop his grog for a month, and I don't see why you are to set a bad example; you've

been too long in barracks, sir, by half. Who is that?—Mr. Williams and Mr. Moore—both on the hammocks, too. Up to the fore-topmast head, both of you, directly. Mr. Thomas, up to the main: and I say, you youngster, stealing off, perch yourself upon the spanker-boom, and let me know when you've rode to London. By God! the service is going to hell. I don't know what officers are made of now-a-days. I'll marry some of you young gentlemen to the gunner's daughter before long. Quarter-deck's no better than a bear-garden. No wonder, when lieutenants set the example."

This latter remark could only be applied to O'Brien, who stood in the quarter-boat giving directions, before the tirade of Mr. Phillott stopped the amusement of the party. O'Brien immediately stepped out of the boat, and going up to Mr. Phillott touched his hat, and said, "Mr. Phillott, we had the captain's permission to catch the shark, and a shark is not to be got on board by walking up and down on the quarter-deck. As regards myself, as long as the captain is on board, I hold myself responsible to him alone for my conduct; and if you think I have done wrong, forward your complaint; but if you pretend to use such language to me,

as you have to others, I shall hold you responsible. I am here, sir, as an officer and a gentleman, and will be treated as such; and allow me to observe, that I consider the quarter-deck more disgraced by foul and ungentlemanly language, than I do by an officer accidentally standing upon the hammocks. However, as you have thought proper to interfere, you may now get the shark on board yourself."

Mr. Phillott turned very red, for he never had come in contact in this way with O'Brien. All the other officers had submitted quietly to his unpleasant manner of speaking to them. "Very well, Mr. O'Brien; I shall hold you answerable for this language," replied he, "and shall most certainly report your conduct to the captain."

"I will save you the trouble; Captain Kearney is now coming up, and I will report it myself."

This O'Brien did, upon the captain's putting his foot on the quarter-deck.

"Well," observed the captain to Mr. Phillott, "what is it you complain of?"

"Mr. O'Brien's language, sir. Am I to be addressed on the quarter-deck in that manner?"

"I really must say, Mr. Phillott," replied

Captain Kearney, "that I do not perceive any thing in what Mr. O'Brien said, but what is correct. I command here; and if an officer so nearly equal in rank to yourself has committed himself, you are not to take the law into your own hands. The fact is, Mr. Phillott, your language is not quite so correct as I could wish it. I overheard every word that passed, and I consider that *you* have treated *your superior* officer with disrespect—that is, *me*. I gave permission that the shark should be caught, and with that permission, I consequently allowed those little deviations from the discipline of the service, which must inevitably take place. Yet you have thought proper to interfere with my permission, which is tantamount to an order, and have made use of harsh language, and punished the young gentlemen for obeying my injunctions. You will oblige me, sir, by calling them all down, and in restraining your petulance for the future. I will always support your authority when you are correct; but I regret that, in this instance, you have necessitated me to weaken it."

This was a most severe check to Mr. Phillott, who immediately went below, after hailing the mast-heads and calling down the midshipmen.

As soon as he was gone, we were all on the hammocks again; the shark was hauled forward, hoisted on board, and every frying-pan in the ship was in requisition. We were all much pleased with Captain Kearney's conduct on this occasion; and, as O'Brien observed to me, "He really is a good fellow and clever officer. What a thousand pities it is, that he is such a confounded liar!" I must do Mr. Phillott the justice to say, that he bore no malice on this occasion, but treated us as before, which is saying a great deal in his favour, when it is considered what power a first lieutenant has of annoying and punishing his inferiors.

CHAPTER XIII.

Another set-to between the Captain and First Lieutenant—Cutting-out expedition—Mr. Chucks mistaken—He dies like a gentleman—Swinburne begins his account of the battle off St. Vincent.

WE had not been more than a week under the Danish island of St. Thomas, when we discovered a brig close in-shore. We made all sail in chase, and soon came within a mile and a half of the shore, when she anchored under a battery, which opened its fire upon us. Their elevation was too great, and several shots passed over us and between our masts.

“ I once met with a very remarkable circumstance,” observed Captain Kearney. “ Three guns were fired at a frigate I was on board of, from a battery, all at the same time. The three shots cut away the three topsail ties, and

down came all our topsail yards upon the cap at the same time. That the Frenchmen might not suppose that they had taken such good aim, we turned up our hands to reef topsails; and by the time that the men were off the yards, the ties were spliced, and the topsails run up again."

Mr. Phillott could not stand this most enormous fib, and he replied, "Very odd indeed, Captain Kearney: but I have known a stranger circumstance. We had put in the powder to the four guns on the main deck, when we were fighting the Danish gun-boats, in a frigate I was in, and as the men withdrew the rammer, a shot from the enemy entered the muzzle, and completed the loading of each gun. We fired their own shot back upon them, and this occurred three times running."

"Upon my word," replied Captain Kearney, who had his glass upon the battery, "I think you must have dreamt that circumstance, Mr. Phillott."

"Not more than you did about the topsail ties, Captain Kearney."

Captain Kearney at that time had the long glass in his hand, holding it up over his shoulder. A shot from the battery whizzed over

his head, and took the glass out of his hand, shivering it to pieces. "That's once," said Captain Kearney, very coolly; "but will you pretend that that could ever happen three times running? They might take my head off, or my arm, next time, but not another glass; whereas the topsail ties might be cut by three different shot. But give me another glass, Mr. Simple: I am certain that this vessel is a privateer. What think you, Mr. O'Brien?"

"I am every bit of your opinion, Captain Kearney," replied O'Brien; "and I think it would be a very pretty bit of practice to the ship's company, to take her out from under that footy battery."

"Starboard the helm, Mr. Phillott; keep away four points, and then we will think of it to-night."

The frigate was now kept away, and ran out of the fire of the battery. It was then about an hour before sunset, and in the West Indies the sun does not set as it does in the northern latitudes. There is no twilight: he descends in glory, surrounded with clouds of gold and rubies in their gorgeous tints; and once below the horizon, all is dark.

As soon as it was dark, we hauled our wind

off shore ; and a consultation being held between the captain, Mr. Phillott, and O'Brien, the captain at last decided that the attempt should be made. Indeed, although cutting out is a very serious affair, as you combat under every disadvantage ; still the mischief done to our trade by the fast-sailing privateers, was so great in the West Indies, that almost every sacrifice was warrantable for the interests of the country. Still Captain Kearney, although a brave and prudent officer—one who calculated chances, and who would not risk his men without he deemed that necessity imperiously demanded that such should be done—was averse to this attack, from his knowledge of the bay in which the brig was anchored ; and although Mr. Phillott and O'Brien both were of opinion that it should be a night attack, Captain Kearney decided otherwise. He considered that although the risk might be greater, yet the force employed would be more consolidated, and that those who would hold back in the night, dare not do so during the day. Moreover, that the people on shore in the battery, as well as those in the privateer, would be on the alert all night, and not expecting an attack during the day, would be taken off their guard. It was

therefore directed that everything should be in preparation during the night, and that the boats should shove off before daylight, and row in shore, concealing themselves behind some rocks under the cliffs which formed the cape upon one side of the harbour ; and, if not discovered, remain there till noon, at which time it was probable that the privateer's men would be on shore, and the vessel might be captured without difficulty.

It is always a scene of much interest on board a man-of-war, when preparations are made for an expedition of this description ; and as the reader may not have been witness to them, it may perhaps be interesting to describe them. The boats of men-of-war have generally two crews ; the common boats' crew, which are selected so as not to take away the most useful men from the ship ; and the service, or fighting boats' crews, which are selected from the very best men on board. The coxswains of the boats are the most trustworthy men in the ship ; and, on this occasion, have to see that their boats are properly equipped.

The launch, yawl, first and second cutters, were the boats appointed for the expedition. They all carried guns mounted upon slides,

which ran fore and aft between the men. After the boats were hoisted out, the guns were lowered down into them and shipped in the bows of the boats. The arm-chests were next handed in, which contain the cartridges and ammunition. The shot were put into the bottom of the boats; and so far they were all ready. The oars of the boats were fitted to pull with grummets upon iron thole-pins, that they might make little noise, and might swing fore and aft without falling overboard, when the boats pulled alongside of the privateer. A breaker or two, (that is, small casks holding about seven gallons each,) of water was put into each boat, and also the men's allowance of spirits, in case they should be detained by any unforeseen circumstances. The men belonging to the boats were fully employed in looking after their arms; some fitting their flints to their pistols, others, and the major part of them, sharpening their cutlasses at the grindstone, or with a file borrowed from the armourer—all were busy and all merry. The very idea of going into action is a source of joy to an English sailor, and more jokes are made, more merriment excited at that time than at any other. Then, as it often happens, that one or two of the service

boats' crews may be on the sick list, urgent solicitations are made by others that they may supply their places. The only parties who appear at all grave, are those who are to remain in the frigate, and not share in the expedition. There is no occasion to order the boats to be manned, for the men are generally in, long before they are piped away. Indeed, one would think that it was a party of pleasure instead of danger and of death upon which they were about to proceed.

Captain Kearney selected the officers who were to have the charge of the boats. He would not trust any of the midshipmen on so dangerous a service. He said, that he had known so many occasions in which their rashness and foolhardiness had spoilt an expedition; he therefore appointed Mr. Phillott, the first lieutenant, to the launch; O'Brien to the yawl; the master to the first, and Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, to the second cutter. Mr. Chucks was much pleased with the idea of having the command of a boat, and asked me to come with him, to which I consented, although I had intended, as usual, to have gone with O'Brien.

About an hour before daylight we ran the frigate to within a mile and a half of the

shore, and the boats shoved off; the frigate then wore round, and stood out in the offing, that she might at daylight be at such a distance as not to excite any suspicion that our boats were sent away, while we in the boats pulled quietly in-shore. We were not a quarter of an hour before we arrived at the cape forming one side of the bay, and were well secreted among the cluster of rocks which were underneath. Our oars were laid in; the boats' painters made fast; and orders given for the strictest silence. The rocks were very high, and the boats were not to be seen without any one should come to the edge of the precipice; and even then, they would, in all probability, have been supposed to have been rocks. The water was as smooth as glass, and when it was broad daylight, the men hung listlessly over the sides of the boats, looking at the corals below, and watching the fish as they glided between.

“ I can't say, Mr. Simple,” said Mr. Chucks to me, in an under tone, “ that I think well of this expedition; and I have an idea that some of us will lose the number of our mess. After a calm comes a storm; and how quiet is everything now! But I'll take off my great coat, for

the sun is hot already. Coxswain, give me my jacket."

Mr. Chucks had put on his great coat, but not his jacket underneath, which he had left on one of the guns on the main deck, all ready to change as soon as the heavy dew had gone off. The coxswain handed him the jacket, and Mr. Chucks threw off his great coat to put it on; but when it was opened, it proved, that by mistake he had taken away the jacket, surmounted by two small epaulettes, belonging to Captain Kearney, which the captain's steward, who had taken it out to brush, had also laid upon the same gun.

"By all the nobility of England!" cried Mr. Chucks, "I have taken away the captain's jacket by mistake. Here's a pretty mess! if I put on my great coat I shall be dead with sweating; if I put on no jacket I shall be roasted brown; but if I put on the captain's jacket, I shall be considered disrespectful."

The men in the boats tittered; and Mr. Phil-lott, who was in the launch next to us, turned round to see what was the matter. O'Brien was sitting in the stern sheets of the launch with the first lieutenant, and I leaned over and told them.

“By the powers! I don’t see why the captain’s jacket will be at all hurt by Mr. Chucks putting it on,” replied O’Brien; “unless, indeed, a bullet were to go through it, and then it won’t be any fault of Mr. Chucks.”

“No,” replied the first lieutenant; “and if one did, the captain might keep the jacket, and swear that the bullet went round his body without wounding him. He’ll have a good yarn to spin. So put it on, Mr. Chucks; you’ll make a good mark for the enemy.”

“That I will stand the risk of with pleasure,” observed the boatswain to me, “for the sake of being considered a gentleman. So here’s on with it.”

There was a general laugh when Mr. Chucks pulled on the captain’s jacket, and sank down in the stern sheets of the cutter, with great complacency of countenance. One of the men in the boat that we were in, thought proper, however, to continue his laugh a little longer than Mr. Chucks considered necessary, who leaning forward, thus addressed him: “I say, Mr. Webber, I beg leave to observe to you, in the most delicate manner in the world—just to hint to you—that it is not the custom to laugh at your superior officer. I mean just to insinuate,

that you are a d—d impudent son of a sea cook ; and if we both live and do well, I will prove to you, that if I am to be laughed at in a boat with the captain's jacket on, that I am not to be laughed at on board the frigate with the boat-swain's rattan in my fist ; and so look out, my hearty, for squalls, when you come on the fore-castle ; for I'll be d—d if I don't make you see more stars than God Almighty ever made, and cut more capers than all the dancing-masters in France. Mark my words, you burgoo-eating, pea-soup-swilling, trowsers-scrubbing son of a bitch !”

Mr. Chucks having at the end of this oration raised his voice above the pitch required by the exigency of the service, was called to order by the first lieutenant, and again sank back into the stern sheets with all the importance and authoritative show peculiarly appertaining to a pair of epaulettes.

We waited behind the rocks until noon-day, without being discovered by the enemy ; so well were we concealed. We had already sent an officer, who, carefully hiding himself by lying down on the rocks, had several times reconnoitered the enemy. Boats were passing and re-passing continually from the privateer to the

shore ; and it appeared, that they went on shore full of men and returned with only one or two ; so that we were in great hopes that we should find but few men to defend the vessel. Mr. Phillott looked at his watch, held it up to O'Brien, to prove that he had complied exactly with the orders he had received from the captain, and then gave the word to get the boats under weigh. The painters were cast off by the bowmen, the guns were loaded and primed, the men seized their oars, and in two minutes we were clear of the rocks, and drawn up in a line within a quarter of a mile from the harbour's mouth, and not half a mile from the privateer brig. We rowed as quickly as possible, but we did not cheer until the enemy fired the first gun ; which he did from a quarter unexpected, as we entered the mouth of the harbour, with our union jack trailing in the water over our stern, for it was a dead calm. It appeared, that at the low point under the cliffs, at each side of the little bay, they had raised a water battery of two guns each. One of these guns, laden with grape shot, was now fired at the boats, but the elevation was too low, and although the water was ploughed up to within five yards of the launch, no injury was

received. We were equally fortunate in the discharge of the other three guns; two of which we passed so quickly, that they were not aimed sufficiently forward, so that their shot fell astern; and the other, although the shot fell among us, did no further injury than cutting in half two of the oars of the first cutter.

In the meantime, we had observed that the boats had shoved off from the privateer as soon as they had perceived us, and had returned to her laden with men; the boats had been dispatched a second time, but had not yet returned. They were now about the same distance from the privateer as were our boats, and it was quite undecided which of us would be first on board. O'Brien perceiving this, pointed out to Mr. Phillott that we should first attack the boats, and afterwards board on the side to which they pulled; as, in all probability, there would be an opening left in the boarding nettings, which were tied up to the yard-arms, and presented a formidable obstacle to our success. Mr. Phillott agreed with O'Brien: he ordered the bowmen to lay in their oars and keep the guns pointed ready to fire at the word given, and desiring the other men to pull their best. Every nerve, every muscle was brought into play



PETER AND O'BRIEN AT A CUTTING-OUT EXPEDITION.

by our anxious and intrepid seamen. When within about twenty yards of the vessel, and also of the boats, the orders were given to fire—the carronade of the launch poured out round and grape so well directed, that one of the French boats sunk immediately; and the musket balls with which our other smaller guns were loaded, did great execution among their men. In one minute more, with three cheers from our sailors, we were all alongside together, English and French boats pell-mell, and a most determined close conflict took place. The French fought desperately, and as they were overpowered, they were reinforced by those from the privateer, who could not look on and behold their companions requiring their assistance, without coming to their aid. Some jumped down into our boats from the chains, into the midst of our men; others darted cold shot at us, either to kill us or to sink our boats; and thus did one of the most desperate hand-to-hand conflicts take place that ever was witnessed.

But it was soon decided in our favour, for we were the stronger party and the better armed; and when all opposition was over, we jumped into the privateer, and found not a man left on

board, only a large dog, who flew at O'Brien's throat as he entered the port.

"Don't kill him," said O'Brien, as the sailors hastened to his assistance ; "only take away his gripe."

The sailors disengaged the dog, and O'Brien led him up to a gun, saying, "By Jasus, my boy, you are my prisoner."

But although we had possession of the privateer, our difficulties, as it will prove, were by no means over. We were now exposed not only to the fire of the two batteries at the harbour-mouth which we had to pass, but also to that of the battery at the bottom of the bay, which had fired at the frigate. In the meantime, we were very busy in cutting the cable, lowering the topsails and taking the wounded men on board the privateer, from out of the boats. All this was, however, but the work of a few minutes. Most of the Frenchmen were killed ; our own wounded amounted to only nine seamen and Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, who was shot through the body, apparently with little chance of surviving. As Mr. Phillott observed, the captain's epaulettes had made him a mark for the enemy, and he had fallen in his borrowed plumes.

As soon as they were all on board, and laid on the deck—for there were, as near as I can recollect, about fourteen wounded Frenchmen as well as our own—tow ropes were got out forwards, the boats were manned, and we proceeded to tow the brig out of the harbour. It was a dead calm, and we made but little way, but our boat's crew, flushed with victory, cheered, and rallied, and pulled, with all their strength. The enemy perceiving that the privateer was taken, and the French boats drifting empty up the harbour, now opened their fire upon us, and with great effect. Before we had towed abreast of the two water batteries, we had received three shots between wind and water from the other batteries, and the sea was pouring fast into the vessel. I had been attending to poor Mr. Chucks, who lay on the starboard side, near the wheel, the blood flowing from his wound, and tracing its course down the planks of the deck, to a distance of some feet from where he lay. He appeared very faint, and I tied my handkerchief round his body, so as to stop the effusion of blood, and brought him some water, with which I bathed his face, and poured some into his

mouth. He opened his eyes wide, and looked at me.

“Ah, Mr. Simple,” said he, faintly, “is it you? It’s all over with me; but it could not be better—could it?”

“How do you mean?” inquired I.

“Why, have I not fallen dressed like an officer and a gentleman?” said he, referring to the captain’s jacket and epaulettes. “I’d sooner die now, with this dress on, than recover to put on the boatswain’s uniform. I feel quite happy.”

He pressed my hand, and then closed his eyes again, from weakness. We were now nearly abreast of the two batteries on the points, the guns of which had been trained so as to bear upon our boats that were towing out the brig. The first shot went through the bottom of the launch, and sank her; fortunately, all the men were saved; but as she was the boat that towed next to the brig, great delay occurred in getting the others clear of her, and taking the brig again in tow. The shot now poured in thick, and the grape became very annoying. Still our men gave way, cheering at every shot fired, and we had nearly passed the batteries,

with trifling loss, when we perceived that the brig was so full of water, that she could not swim many minutes longer, and that it would be impossible to tow her alongside of the frigate. Mr. Phillott, under these circumstances, decided that it would be useless to risk more lives, and that the wounded should be taken out of the brig, and the boats should pull away for the ship. He desired me to get the wounded men into the cutter, which he sent alongside, and then to follow the other boats. I made all the haste I could, not wishing to be left behind, and as soon as all our wounded men were in the boats, I went to Mr. Chucks, to remove him. He appeared somewhat revived, but would not allow us to remove him.

“My dear Mr. Simple,” said he, “it is of no use; I never can recover it, and I prefer dying here. I entreat you not to move me. If the enemy take possession of the brig before she sinks, I shall be buried with military honours; if they do not, I shall at least die in the dress of a gentleman. Hasten away as fast as you can, before you lose more men. Here I stay—that’s decided.”

I expostulated with him, but at that time two boats full of men appeared, pulling out of the

harbour to the brig. The enemy had perceived that our boats had deserted her, and were coming to take possession. I had therefore no time to urge Mr. Chucks to change his resolution, and not wishing to force a dying man, I shook his hand and left him. It was with some difficulty I escaped, for the boats had come up close to the brig; they chased me a little while, but the yawl and the cutter turning back to my assistance, they gave up the pursuit. On the whole this was a very well arranged and well conducted expedition. The only man lost was Mr. Chucks, for the wounds of the others were none of them mortal. Captain Kearney was quite satisfied with our conduct, and so was the admiral, when it was reported to him. Captain Kearney did indeed grumble a little about his jacket, and sent for me to inquire why I had not taken it off Mr. Chucks, and brought it on board. As I did not choose to tell him the exact truth, I replied, "That I could not disturb a dying man, and that the jacket was so saturated with blood, that he never could have worn it again,"—which was the case.

"At all events, you might have brought away my epaulettes," replied he; "but you youngsters think of nothing but gormandizing."

I had the first watch that night, when Swinburne, the quarter-master, came up to me, and asked me all the particulars of the affair, for he was not in the boats. "Well," said he, "that Mr. Chucks appeared to be a very good boatswain in his way, if he could only have kept his rattan a little quiet. He was a smart fellow and knew his duty. We had just such another killed in our ship, in the action off Cape St. Vincent."

"What! were you in that action?" replied I.

"Yes, I was, and belonged to the Captain, Lord Nelson's ship."

"Well, then, suppose you tell me all about it."

"Why, Mr. Simple, d'ye see, I've no objection to spin you a yarn now and then," replied Swinburne; "but, as Mr. Chucks used to say, allow me to observe, in the most delicate manner in the world, that I perceive that the man who has charge of your hammock, and slings you a clean one now and then, has very often a good glass of grog for his *yarns*, and I do not see but that mine are as well worth a glass of grog as his."

"So they are, Swinburne, and better too

and I promise you a good stiff one to-morrow evening."

"That will do, sir: now then I'll tell you all about it, and more about it too than most can, for I know how the action was brought about."

I hove the log, marked the board, and then sat down abaft on the signal chest with Swinburne, who commenced his narrative as follows.

"You must know, Mr. Simple, that when the English fleet came down the Mediterranean, after the 'vackyation of Corsica, they did not muster more than seventeen sail of the line, while the Spanish fleet from Ferrol and Carthagena, had joined company at Cadiz, and 'mounted to near thirty. Sir John Jarvis had the command of our fleet at the time, but as the Dons did not seem at all inclined to come out and have a brush with us, almost two to one, Sir John left Sir W. Parker, with six sail of the line, to watch the Spanish beggars, while he went into Lisbon with the remainder of the fleet, to water and refit. Now, you see, Mr. Simple, Portugal was at that time what they calls neutral, that is to say, she didn't meddle

at all in the affair, being friends with both parties, and just as willing to supply fresh beef and water to the Spaniards as to the English, if so be the Spaniards had come out to ax for it, which they dar'n't. The Portuguese and the English have always been the best of friends, because we can't get no port wine anywhere else, and they can't get nobody else to buy it of them; so the Portuguese gave up their arsenal at Lisbon, for the use of the English, and there we kept all our stores, under the charge of that old dare-devil, Sir Isaac Coffin. Now it so happened, that one of the clerks in old Sir Isaac's office, a Portuguese chap, had been some time before that in the office of the Spanish ambassador; he was a very smart sort of a chap, and sarved as interpreter, and the old commissioner put great faith in him."

"But how did you learn all this, Swinburne?"

"Why, I'll tell you, Mr. Simple; I steered the yawl, as coxswain, and when admirals and captains talk in the stern sheets, they very often forget that the coxswain is close behind them. I only learnt half of it that way, the rest I put together when I compared logs with the admiral's steward, who of course heard a

great deal now and then. The first I heard of it, was when old Sir John called out to Sir Isaac, after the second bottle, ‘ I say, Sir Isaac, who killed the Spanish messenger ?’ ‘ Not I, by God !’ replied Sir Isaac, ‘ I only left him for dead ;’ and then they both laughed, and so did Nelson, who was sitting with them. Well, Mr. Simple, it was reported to Sir Isaac that his clerk was often seen taking memorandums of the different orders given to the fleet, particularly those as to there being no wasteful expenditure of his majesty’s stores. Upon which, Sir Isaac goes to the admiral, and requests that the man might be discharged. Now, old Sir John was a sly old fox, and he answered, ‘ Not so, commissioner—perhaps we may catch them in their own trap.’ So the admiral sits down, and calls for pen and ink, and he flourishes out a long letter to the commissioner, stating that all the stores of the fleet were expended, representing as how it would be impossible to go to sea without a supply, and wishing to know when the commissioner expected more transports from England. He also said, that if the Spanish fleet were now to come out from Cadiz, it would be impossible for him to protect Sir W. Parker with his six sail of the line, who was watching

the Spanish fleet, as he could not quit the port in his present condition. To this letter the commissioner answered, that from the last accounts, he thought that in the course of six weeks or two months, they might receive supplies from England, but that sooner than that was impossible. These letters were put in the way of the d——d Portuguese spy clerk, who copied them, and was seen that evening to go into the house of the Spanish ambassador. Sir John then sent a message to Ferro—that's a small town on the Portuguese coast to the southward—with a despatch to Sir William Parker, desiring him to run away to Cape St. Vincent, and decoy the Spanish fleet there, in case they should come out after him. Well, Mr. Simple, so far d'ye see the train was well laid. The next thing to do was to watch the Spanish ambassador's house, and see if he sent away any despatches. Two days after the letters had been taken to him by this rascal of a clerk, the Spanish ambassador sent away two messengers, one for Cadiz and the other for Madrid, which is the town where the king of Spain lives. The one to Cadiz was permitted to go, but the one to Madrid was stopped by the directions of the admiral, and this job was

confided to the commissioner, Sir Isaac, who settled it somehow or another; and this was the reason why the admiral called out to him, ‘I say, Sir Isaac, who killed the messenger?’ They brought back his despatches, by which they found out that advice had been sent to the Spanish admiral—I forget his name, something like *Magazine*—informing him of the supposed crippled state of our squadron. Sir John, taking it for granted that the Spaniards would not lose an opportunity of taking six sail of the line—more English ships than they have ever taken in their lives—waited a few days to give them time, and then sailed from Lisbon for Cape St. Vincent, where he joined Sir W. Parker, and fell in with the Spaniards sure enough, and a pretty drubbing we gave them. Now it’s not every body that could tell you all that, Mr. Simple.”

“Well, but now for the action, Swinburne.”

“Lord bless you, Mr. Simple! it’s now past seven bells, and I can’t fight the battle of St. Vincent in half an hour; besides which, it’s well worth another glass of grog to hear all about that battle.”

“Well, you shall have one, Swinburne; only don’t forget to tell it to me.”

Swinburne and I then separated, and in less than an hour afterwards I was dreaming of despatches—Sir John Jervis—Sir Isaac Coffin—and Spanish messengers.

CHAPTER XIV.

O'Brien's good advice—Captain Kearney again deals in the marvellous.

I do not remember any circumstance in my life which, at that time, lay so heavily on my mind, as the loss of poor Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, whom, of course, I took it for granted, I should never see again. I believe that the chief cause was, that at the time I entered the service, and every one considered me to be the fool of the family, Mr. Chucks and O'Brien were the only two who thought of and treated me differently; and it was their conduct which induced me to apply myself, and encouraged me to exertion. I believe, that many a boy, who, if properly patronized, would turn out well, is, by the injudicious system of brow-beating and ridicule,

forced into the wrong path, and, in his despair, throws away all self-confidence, and allows himself to be carried away by the stream to perdition. O'Brien was not very partial to reading himself; he played the German flute remarkably well, and had a very good voice. His chief amusement was practising, or rather playing, which is a very different thing; but although he did not study himself, he always made me come into his cabin for an hour or two every day, and, after I had read, repeat to him the contents of the book. By this method he not only instructed me, but gained a great deal of information himself; for he made so many remarks upon what I had read, that it was impressed upon both our memories.

"Well, Peter," he would say, as he came into the cabin, "what have you to tell me this morning? Sure it's you that's the school-master, and not me,—for I learn from you every day."

"I have not read much, O'Brien, to-day, for I have been thinking of poor Mr. Chucks."

"Very right for you so to do, Peter; never forget your friends in a hurry, you'll not find too many of them as you trot along the highway of life."

“ I wonder whether he is dead ? ”

“ Why, that’s a question I cannot answer ; a bullet through the chest don’t lengthen a man’s days, that’s certain ; but this I know, that he’ll not die if he can help it, now that he’s got the captain’s jacket on.”

“ Yes ; he always aspired to be a gentleman—which was absurd enough in a boatswain.”

“ Not at all absurd, Peter, but very absurd of you to talk without thinking : when did any one of his shipmates ever know Mr. Chucks to do an unhandsome or mean action ? Never—and why ? because he aspired to be a gentleman, and that feeling kept him above it. Vanity’s a confounded donkey, very apt to put his head between his legs and chuck us over ; but pride’s a fine horse, who will carry us over the ground, and enable us to distance our fellow-travellers. Mr. Chucks had pride, and that’s always commendable, even in a boatswain. How often have you read of people rising from nothing, and becoming great men ? This was from talent, sure enough ; but it was talent with pride to force it onward, not talent with vanity to check it.”

“ You are very right, O’Brien ; I spoke foolishly.”

“ Never mind, Peter, nobody heard you but me, so it’s of no consequence. Don’t you dine in the cabin to-day ?”

“ Yes.”

“ So do I. The captain is in a most marvellous humour this morning. He told me one or two yarns that quite staggered my politeness and my respect for him on the quarter-deck. What a pity it is that a man should have gained such a bad habit.”

“ He’s quite incurable, I’m afraid,” replied I ; “ but, certainly, his fibs do no harm ; they are what they call white lies : I do not think he would really tell a lie, that is, a lie which would be considered to disgrace a gentleman.”

“ Peter, *all* lies disgrace a gentleman, white or black ; although I grant there is a difference. To say the least of it, it is a dangerous habit, for white lies are but the gentlemen ushers to black ones. I know but of one point on which a lie is excusable, and that is, when you wish to deceive the enemy. Then your duty to your country warrants your lying till you’re black in the face ; and, for the very reason that it goes

against your grain, it becomes, as it were, a sort of virtue."

"What was the difference between the marine officer and Mr. Phillott, that occurred this morning?"

"Nothing at all in itself—the marine officer is a bit of a gaby, and takes offence where none is meant. Mr. Phillott has a foul tongue, but he has a good heart."

"What a pity it is!"

"It is a pity, for he's a smart officer; but the fact is, Peter, that junior officers are too apt to copy their superiors, and that makes it very important that a young gentleman should sail with a captain who is a gentleman. Now, Phillott served the best of his time with Captain Ballover, who is notorious in the service for foul and abusive language. What is the consequence?—that Phillott, and many others, who have served under him, have learnt his bad habit."

"I should think, O'Brien, that the very circumstance of having had your feelings so often wounded by such language when you were a junior officer, would make you doubly careful not to make use of it to others, when you had advanced in the service."

“Peter, that’s just the *first* feeling, which wears away after a time; but at last, your own sense of indignation becomes blunted, and becoming indifferent to it, you forget also that you wound the feelings of others, and carry the habit with you, to the great injury and disgrace of the service. But it’s time to dress for dinner, so you’d better make yourself scarce, Peter, while I tidivate myself off a little, according to the rules and regulations of his Majesty’s service, when you are asked to dine with the skipper.”

We met at the captain’s table, where we found, as usual, a great display of plate, but very little else, except the ship’s allowance. We certainly had now been cruising some time, and there was some excuse for it; but still, few captains would have been so unprovided. “I’m afraid, gentlemen, you will not have a very grand dinner,” observed the captain, as the steward removed the plated covers off the dishes; but when on service we must rough it out how we can. Mr. O’Brien, pea-soup? I recollect faring harder than this through one cruise, in a flush vessel. We were thirteen weeks up to our knees in water, and living the

whole time upon raw pork—not being able to light a fire during the cruise.”

“ Pray, Captain Kearney, may I ask where this happened ?”

“ To be sure. It was off Bermudas: we cruised for seven weeks before we could find the Islands, and began verily to think, that the Bermudas were themselves on a cruise.”

“ I presume, sir, you were not sorry to have a fire to cook your provisions when you came to an anchor ?” said O’Brien.

“ I beg your pardon,” replied Captain Kearney; “ we had become so accustomed to raw provisions and wet feet, that we could not eat our meals cooked, or help dipping our legs over the side, for a long while afterwards. I saw one of the boat-keepers astern catch a large barracouta, and eat it alive—indeed, if I had not given the strictest orders, and flogged half-a-dozen of them, I doubt whether they would not have eaten their victuals raw to this day. The force of habit is tremendous.”

“ It is indeed,” observed Mr. Phillott, drily, and winking to us—referring to the captain’s incredible stories.

“ It is indeed,” repeated O’Brien; “ we see

the ditch in our neighbour's eye, and cannot observe the log of wood in our own ;" and O'Brien winked at me, referring to Phillott's habit of bad language.

" I once knew a married man," observed the captain, " who had been always accustomed to go to sleep with his hand upon his wife's head, and would not allow her to wear a night-cap in consequence. Well, she caught cold and died, and he never could sleep at night until he took a clothes-brush to bed with him, and laid his hand upon that, which answered the purpose—such was the force of habit."

" I once saw a dead body galvanized," observed Mr. Phillott ; " it was the body of a man who had taken a great deal of snuff during his lifetime, and, as soon as the battery was applied to his spine, the body very gently raised its arm, and put its fingers to its nose, as if it was taking a pinch."

" You saw that yourself, Mr. Phillott ?" observed the captain, looking at the first lieutenant earnestly in the face.

" Yes, sir," replied Mr. Phillott, coolly.

" Have you told that story often ?"

" Very often, sir."

" Because I know that some people, by con-

stantly telling a story, at last believe it to be true ; not that I refer to you, Mr. Phillott, but still, I should recommend you not to tell that story where you are not well known, or people may doubt your credibility."

" I make it a rule to believe everything myself," observed Mr. Phillott, " out of politeness ; and I expect the same courtesy from others."

" Then, upon my soul ! when you tell that story, you trespass very much upon our good manners. Talking of courtesy, you must meet a friend of mine, who has been a courtier all his life ; he cannot help bowing. I have seen him bow to his horse, and thank him, after he had dismounted—beg pardon of a puppy for treading on his tail ; and one day, when he fell over a scraper, he took his hat off, and made it a thousand apologies for his inattention."

" Force of habit again," said O'Brien.

" Exactly so. Mr. Simple, will you take a slice of this pork ; and perhaps you'll do me the honour to take a glass of wine ? Lord Privilege would not much admire our dinner to-day, would he, Mr. Simple ?"

" As a variety he might, sir, but not for a continuance."

“Very truly said. Variety is charming. The negroes here get so tired of salt fish and occra broth, that they eat dirt by way of a relish. Mr. O’Brien, how remarkably well you played that sonata of Pleydel’s this morning.”

“I am happy that I did not annoy you, Captain Kearney, at all events,” replied O’Brien.

“On the contrary, I am very partial to good music. My mother was a great performer. I recollect once, she was performing a piece on the piano, in which she had to imitate a *thunder storm*. So admirably did she hit it off, that when we went to tea, all the cream was *turned sour*, as well as three casks of *beer* in the cellar.”

At this assertion Mr. Phillott could contain himself no longer; he burst out into a loud laugh, and having a glass of wine to his lips, spattered it all over the table, and over me, who unfortunately was opposite to him.

“I really beg pardon, Captain Kearney, but the idea of such an expensive talent was too amusing. Will you permit me to ask you a question? As there could not have been thunder without lightning, were any people killed at the same time by the electric fluid of the piano?”

“No, sir,” replied Captain Kearney, very angrily; “but her performance *electrified* us, which was something like it. Perhaps, Mr. Phillott, as you lost your last glass of wine, you will allow me to take another with you?”

“With great pleasure,” replied the first lieutenant, who perceived that he had gone far enough.

“Well, gentlemen,” said the captain, “we shall soon be in the land of plenty. I shall cruise a fortnight more, and then join the admiral at Jamaica. We must make out our despatch relative to the cutting out of the *Sylvia*, (that was the name of the privateer brig,) and I am happy to say that I shall feel it my duty to make honourable mention of all the party present. Steward, coffee.”

The first lieutenant, O’Brien, and I, bowed to this flattering avowal on the part of the captain; as for myself, I felt delighted. The idea of my name being mentioned in the Gazette, and the pleasure that it would give to my father and mother, mantled the blood in my cheeks till I was as red as a turkey-cock.

“*Cousin Simple*,” said the captain, good-naturedly, “you have no occasion to blush; your conduct deserves it, and you are indebted

to Mr. Phillott for having made me acquainted with your gallantry."

Coffee was soon over, and I was glad to leave the cabin and be alone, that I might compose my perturbed mind. I felt too happy. I did not, however, say a word to my messmates, as it might have created feelings of envy or ill-will. O'Brien gave me a caution not to do so, when I met him afterwards, so that I was very glad that I had been so circumspect.

CHAPTER XV.

Swinburne continues his narrative of the battle off Cape St. Vincent.

THE second night after this, we had the middle watch, and I claimed Swinburne's promise that he would spin his yarn, relative to the battle of St. Vincent. "Well, Mr. Simple, so I will; but I require a little priming, or I shall never go off."

"Will you have your glass of grog before or after?"

"Before, by all means, if you please, sir. Run down and get it, and I'll heave the log for you in the mean time, when we shall have a good hour without interruption, for the sea-breeze will be steady, and we are under easy sail." I brought up a stiff glass of grog, which

Swinburne tossed off, and as he finished it, sighed deeply as if in sorrow that there was no more. Having stowed away the tumbler in one of the capstern holes for the present, we sat down upon a coil of ropes under the weather bulwarks, and Swinburne, replacing his quid of tobacco, commenced as follows.

“ Well, Mr. Simple, as I told you before, old Jervis started with all his fleet for Cape St. Vincent. We lost one of our fleet—and a three-decker, too—the *St. George*; she took the ground, and was obliged to go back to Lisbon; but we soon afterwards were joined by five sail of the line, sent out from England, so that we mustered fifteen sail in all. We had like to lose another of our mess, for, d’ye see, the old *Culloden* and *Colossus* fell foul of each other, and the *Culloden* had the worst on it, but *Troubridge*, who commanded her, was not a man to shy his work, and ax to go in to refit, when there was a chance of meeting the enemy—so he patched her up somehow or another, and reported himself ready for action the very next day. Ready for action he always was, that’s sure enough, but whether his ship was in a fit state to go into action, is quite another thing. But as the sailors used to say in joking,

he was a *true bridge*, and you might trust to him; which meant as much as to say, that he knew how to take his ship into action, and how to fight her when he was fairly in it. I think it was the next day that Cockburn joined us in the *Minerve*, and he brought Nelson along with him, with the intelligence that the Dons had chased him, and that the whole Spanish fleet was out in pursuit of us. Well, Mr. Simple, you may guess we were not a little happy in the Captain, when Nelson joined us, as we knew that if we fell in with the Spaniards, our ship would cut a figure—and so she did, sure enough. That was on the morning of the 13th, and old Jervis made the signal to prepare for action, and keep close order, which means, to have your flying jib-boom in at the stern windows of the ship a-head of you; and we did keep close order, for a man might have walked right round from one ship to the other, either lee or weather line of the fleet. I sha'n't forget that night, Mr. Simple, as long as I live and breathe. Every now and then we heard the signal guns of the Spanish fleet booming at a distance to windward of us, and you may guess how our hearts leaped at the sound, and how we watched with all our ears for the next gun

that was fired, trying to make out their bearings and distance, as we assembled in little knots upon the booms and weather-gangway. It was my middle watch, and I was signal man at the time, so of course I had no time to take a caulk if I was inclined. When my watch was over, I could not go down to my hammock, so I kept the morning watch too, as did most of the men on board: as for Nelson, he walked the deck the whole night, quite in a fever. At daylight it was thick and hazy weather, and we could not make them out; but, about five bells, the old Culloden, who, if she had broke her nose, had not lost the use of her eyes, made the signal for a part of the Spanish fleet in sight. Old Jervis repeated the signal to prepare for action, but he might have saved the wear and tear of the bunting, for we were all ready, bulk-heads down, screens up, guns shotted, tackles rove, yards slung, powder filled, shot on deck, and fire out—and what's more, Mr. Simple, I'll be d—d if we wer'n't all willing too. About six bells in the forenoon, the fog and haze all cleared away at once, just like the rising of the foresail, that they lower down at the Portsmouth theatre, and discovered the whole of the Spanish fleet. I counted them all. 'How

many, Swinburne?' cries Nelson. 'Twenty-six sail, sir,' answered I. Nelson walked the quarter-deck backwards and forwards, rubbing his hands, and laughing to himself, and then he called for his glass, and went to the gangway with Captain Miller. 'Swinburne, keep a good look upon the admiral,' says he. 'Aye, aye, sir,' says I. Now you see, Mr. Simple, twenty-six sail against fifteen were great odds upon paper; but we didn't think so, because we know'd the difference between the two fleets. There was our fifteen sail of the line all in apple-pie order, packed up as close as dominoes, and every man on board of them longing to come to the scratch; while there was their twenty-six, all *somehow nohow*, two lines here, and *no line* there, with a great gap of water in the middle of them. For this gap between their ships we all steered, with all the sail we could carry, because, d'ye see, Mr. Simple, by getting them on both sides of us, we had the advantage of fighting both broadsides, which is just as easy as fighting one, and makes shorter work of it. Just as it struck seven bells, Troubridge opened the ball, *setting* to half a dozen of the Spaniards and making them *reel* 'Tom Collins,' whether or no. Bang—bang—bang, bang! O Mr. Simple,

it's a beautiful sight, to see the first guns fired, that are to bring on a general action. 'He's the luckiest dog, that Troubridge,' said Nelson, stamping with impatience. Our ships were soon hard at it, hammer and tongs, (my eyes how they did pelt it in!) and old Sir John, in the Victory, smashed the cabin windows of the Spanish admiral, with such a hell of a raking broadside, that the fellow bore up as if the devil kicked him. Lord-a-mercy, you might have drove a Portsmouth wagon into his stern—the broadside of the Victory had made room enough. However, they were soon all smothered up in smoke, and we could not make out how things were going on—but we made a pretty good guess. Well, Mr. Simple, as they say at the play, that was act the first, scene the first; and now we had to make our appearance, and I'll leave you to judge, after I've told my tale, whether the old Captain wasn't principal performer, and *top sawyer* over them all. But, stop a moment, I'll just look at the binnacle, for that young topman's nodding at the wheel.—I say, Mr. Smith, are you shutting your eyes to keep them warm, and letting the ship run half a point out of her course? Take care I don't

send for another helmsman, that's all, and give the reason why. You'll make a wry face upon six-water grog, to-morrow, at seven bells. D—n your eyes, keep them open—can't you?"

Swinburne, after this genteel admonition to the man at the wheel, reseated himself, and continued his narrative.

"All this while, Mr. Simple, we in the Captain had not fired a gun; but were ranging up as fast as we could to where the enemy lay in a heap. There were plenty to pick and choose from; and Nelson looked out sharp for a big one, as little boys do when they have to choose an apple; and, by the piper that played before Moses! it was a big one that he ordered the master to put him alongside of. She was a four-decker, called the Santissima Trinidad. We had to pass some whoppers, which would have satisfied any reasonable man; for there was the San Josef, and Salvador del Mondo, and San Nicolas; but nothing would suit Nelson but this four-decked ship; so we crossed the hawse of about six of them, and as soon as we were abreast of her, and at the word "Fire!" every gun went off at once, slap into her, and the old Captain reeled at the discharge as if she was drunk. I wish you'd only seen how we

pitched it into this *Holy Trinity* ; she was *holy* enough before we had done with her, riddled like a sieve, several of her ports knocked into one, and every scupper of her running blood and water. Not but what she stood to it as bold as brass, and gave us nearly gun for gun, and made a very pretty general average in our ship's company. Many of the old captains went to kingdom-come in that business, and many more were obliged to bear up for Greenwich Hospital.

“ ‘ Fire away, my lads—steady aim !’ cries Nelson. ‘ Jump down there, Mr. Thomas, pass the word to reduce the cartridges, the shot go clean through her. Double shot the guns there, fore and aft.’ ”

“ So we were at it for about half an hour, when our guns became so hot from quick firing, that they bounced up to the beams overhead, tearing away their ringbolts, and snapping the breechings like rope yarns. By this time we were almost as much unrigged as if we had been two days paying off in Portsmouth harbour. The four-decker forged a-head, and Troubridge, in the jolly old Culloden, came between us and two other Spanish ships, who were playing into us. She was as fresh as a

daisy, and gave them a dose which quite astonished them. They shook their ears, and fell astern, when the Blenheim laid hold of them, and mauled them so that they went astern again. But it was out of the frying-pan into the fire: for the Orion, Prince George, and one or two others, were coming up, and knocked the very guts out of them. I'll be d——d if they forget the 14th of April, and sarve them right, too. Wasn't a four-decker enough for any two-decker, without any more coming on us? and couldn't the beggars have matched themselves like gentlemen? Well, Mr. Simple, this gave us a minute or two to fetch our breath, let the guns cool, and repair damages, and swab the blood from the decks; but we lost our four-decker, for we could not get near her again."

"What odd names the Spaniards give to their ships, Swinburne."

"Why, yes they do; it would almost appear wicked to belabour the Holy Trinity as we did. But why they should call a four-decked ship the Holy Trinity, I can't tell. Bill Saunders said that the fourth deck was for the Pope, who was as great a parsonage as the others; but I can't understand how that can be. Well, Mr.

Simple, as I was head signal man, I was perched on the poop, and didn't serve at a gun. I had to report all I could see, which was not much, the smoke was so thick; but now and then I could get a peep, as it were, through the holes in the blanket. Of course I was obliged to keep my eye as much as possible upon the admiral, not to make out his signals, for Commodore Nelson wouldn't thank me for that; I knew he hated a signal when in action, so I never took no notice of the bunting, but just watched to see what he was about. So while we are repairing damages, I'll just tell you what I saw of the rest of the fleet. As soon as old Jervis had done for the Spanish admiral, he hauled his wind on the larboard tack, and followed by four or five other ships, weathered the Spanish line and joined Collingwood in the *Excellent*. Then they all dashed through the line; the *Excellent* was the leading ship, and she first took the shine out of the *Salvador del Mondo*, and then left her to be picked up by the other ships, while she attacked a two-decker, who hauled down her colours.—I forget her name just now. As soon as the *Victory* ran alongside of the *Salvador del Mondo*, down went her colours, and *Excellent* reasons had she for striking her flag.

And now, Mr. Simple, the old Captain comes into play again. Having parted company with the four-decker, we had recommenced action with the San Nicolas, a Spanish eighty, and while we were hard at it, old Collingwood comes up in the Excellent. The San Nicolas knowing that the Excellent's broadside would send her to old Nick, put her helm up to avoid being raked: in so doing, she fell foul of the San Josef, a Spanish three-decker, and we being all cut to pieces, and unmanageable—all of us indeed reeling about like drunken men—Nelson ordered his helm a-starboard, and in a jiffy there we were, all three hugging each other, running in one another's guns, smashing our chain-plates and poking our yard arms through each other's canvass.

“ ‘ All hands to board !’ roared Nelson, leaping on the hammocks, and waving his sword.

“ ‘ Hurrah ! hurrah !’ echoed through the decks, and up flew the men, like as many angry bees out of a bee-hive. In a moment, pikes, tomahawks, cutlasses, and pistols were seized, (for it was quite unexpected, Mr. Simple,) and our men poured into the eighty-gun ship, and in two minutes the decks were cleared, and all the Dons pitched below. I joined the boarders

and was on the main-deck when Captain Miller came down, and cried out, ‘On deck again immediately.’ Up we went, and what do you think it was for, Mr. Simple? Why to board a second time; for Nelson having taken the two-decker, swore that he’d have the three-decker as well. So away we went again, clambering up her lofty sides how we could, and dropping down on her decks like hailstones. We all made for the quarter-deck, beat down every Spanish beggar that showed fight, and in five minutes more we had hauled down the colours of two of the finest ships in the Spanish navy. If that wasn’t taking the shine out of the Dons, I should like to know what is. And didn’t the old captains cheer and shake hands, as Commodore Nelson stood on the deck of the San Josef, and received the swords of the Spanish officers! There was enough of them to go right round the capstern, and plenty to spare. Now, Mr. Simple, what do you think of that for a spree?”

“Why, Swinburne, I can only say that I wish I had been there.”

“So did every man in the fleet, Mr. Simple, I can tell you.”

“But what became of the Santissima Trinidad?”

“Upon my word, she behaved one *deck* better than all the others. She held out against four of our ships for a long while, and then hauled down her colours, and no disgrace to her, considering what a precious hammering she had taken first. But the lee division of the Spanish weather fleet, if I may so call it, consisting of eleven sail of the line, came up to her assistance, and surrounded her, so that they got her off. Our ships were too much cut up to commence a new action, and the admiral made the signal to secure the prizes. The Spanish fleet then did what they should have done before—got into line; and we lost no time in doing the same. But we both had had fighting enough.”

“But do you think, Swinburne, that the Spaniards fought well?”

“They’d have fought better, if they’d only have known how. There’s no want of courage in the Dons, Mr. Simple, but they did not support each other. Only observe how Troubridge supported us. By God, Mr. Simple he was the *real fellow*, and Nelson knew it well. He was Nelson’s right-hand man; but

you know there wasn't room for *two* Nelsons. Their ships engaged held out well, it must be acknowledged, but why wer'nt they all in their proper berths? Had they kept close order of sailing, and had all fought as well as those who were captured, it would not have been a very easy matter for fifteen ships to gain a victory over twenty-six. That's long odds, even when backed with British seamen?"

"Well, how did you separate?"

"Why, the next morning the Spaniards had the weather-gage, so they had the option whether to fight or not. At one time they had half a mind, for they bore down to us; upon which we hauled our wind, to show them we were all ready to meet them, and then they thought better of it, and rounded-to again. So as they wouldn't fight, and we didn't wish it, we parted company in the night; and two days afterwards we anchored, with our four prizes, in Lagos Bay. So now you have the whole of it, Mr. Simple, and I've talked till I'm quite hoarse. You haven't by chance another drop of the stuff left to clear my throat? It would be quite a charity."

"I think I have, Swinburne; and as you deserve it, I will go and fetch it."

CHAPTER XVI.

A letter from Father M'Grath, who diplomatizes--
When priest meets priest, then comes the tug of
war—Father O'Toole not to be made a tool of.

We continued our cruise for a fortnight, and then made sail for Jamaica, where we found the admiral at anchor at Port Royal; but our signal was made to keep under weigh, and Captain Kearney, having paid his respects to the admiral, received orders to carry despatches to Halifax. Water and provisions were sent on board by the boats of the admiral's ships, and, to our great disappointment, as the evening closed in, we were again standing out to sea, instead of, as we had anticipated, enjoying ourselves on shore; but the fact was, that orders had arrived from England to send a

frigate immediately up to the admiral at Halifax, to be at his disposal.

I had, however, the satisfaction to know that Captain Kearney had been true to his word in making mention of my name in the despatch, for the clerk showed me a copy of it. Nothing occurred worth mentioning during our passage, except that Captain Kearney was very unwell nearly the whole of the time, and seldom quitted his cabin. It was in October that we anchored in Halifax harbour, and the Admiralty, expecting our arrival there, had forwarded our letters. There were none for me, but there was one for O'Brien, from Father M'Grath, the contents of which were as follow:—

“MY DEAR SON;

“And a good son you are, and that's the truth on it, or devil a bit should you be of a son of mine. You've made your family quite contented and peaceable, and they never fight for the *praties* now—good reason why they should'nt, seeing that there's a plenty for all of them, and the pig cratur's into the bargain. Your father and your mother, and your brother, and your three sisters, send their duty

to you, and their blessings too—and you may add my blessing Terence, which is worth them all; for won't I get you out of purgatory in the twinkling of a bed-post? Make yourself quite asy on that score, and lave it all to me; only just say a *pater* now and then, that when St. Peter lets you in, he mayn't throw it in your teeth, that you've saved your soul by contract, which is the only way by which emperors and kings ever get to heaven. Your letter from Plymouth came safe to hand; Barney, the post-boy having dropped it, under foot, close to our door, the big pig took it into his mouth and ran away with it; but I caught sight of him, and *speaking* to him, he let it go, knowing (the 'cute cratur!) that I could read it better than him. As soon as I had digested the contents, which it was lucky the pig did not instead of me, I just took my meal and my big stick, and then set off for Ballycleuch.

“Now you know, Terence, if you haven't forgot—and if you have, I'll just remind you—that there's a flaunty sort of young woman at the poteen shop there, who calls herself Mrs. O'Rourke, wife to a corporal O'Rourke, who was kilt or died one day, I don't know which, but that's not of much consequence.

The devil a bit do I think the priest ever gave the marriage-blessing to that same; although she swears that she was married on the rock of Gibraltar—it may be a strong rock fore I know, but it's not the rock of salvation, like the seven sacraments, of which marriage is one. *Benedicite!* Mrs. O'Rourke is a little too apt to fleer and jeer at the priests; and if it were not that she softens down her pertinent remarks with a glass or two of the real poteen, which proves some respect for the church, I'd excommunicate her body and soul, and everybody, and every soul that put their lips to the cratur at her door. But she must leave that off, as I tell her, when she gets old and ugly, for then all the whiskey in the world sha'n't save her. But she's a fine woman now, and it goes agin my conscience to help the devil to a fine woman. Now this Mrs. O'Rourke knows everybody and everything that's going on in the country about; and she has a tongue which has never had a holiday since it was let loose.

“ ‘ Good morning to ye, Mrs. O'Rourke,’ says I.

“ ‘ An’ the top of the morning to you, Father M'Grath,’ says she, with a smile;

‘ what brings you here ? Is it a journey that you’re taking to buy the true wood of the cross ; or is it a purty girl that you wish to confess, Father M’Grath ? or is it only that you’re come for a drop of poteen, and a little bit of chat with Mrs. O’Rourke ?’

“ ‘ Sure it’s I who’d be glad to find the same true wood of the cross, Mrs. O’Rourke, but it’s not grown, I suspect, at your town of Ballycleuch ; and it’s no objection I’d have to confess a purty girl like yourself, Mrs. O’Rourke, who’ll only tell me half her sins, and give me no trouble ; but it’s the truth, that I’m here for nothing else but to have a bit of chat with yourself, dainty dear, and taste your poteen, just by way of keeping my mouth nate and clane.’

“ So Mrs. O’Rourke poured out the real stuff, which I drank to her health ; and then, says I, putting down the bit of a glass, ‘ So you’ve a stranger come, I find in your parts, Mrs. O’Rourke.’

“ ‘ I’ve heard the same,’ replied she. So you observe, Terence, I came to the fact all at once by a guess.

“ ‘ I’m tould,’ says I, ‘ that he’s a Scotchman, and spakes what nobody can understand.’

“ ‘ Devil a bit,’ says she ; ‘ he’s an Englishman, and speaks plain enough.’

“ ‘ But what can a man mane, to come here and sit down all alone?’ says I.

“ ‘ All alone, Father M’Grath !’ replied she ; ‘ is a man all alone, when he’s got his wife and childer, and more coming, with the blessing o’ God?’

“ ‘ But those boys are not his own childer, I believe,’ says I.

“ ‘ There again you’re all in a mistake, Father M’Grath,’ rejoins she. ‘ The childer are all his own, and all girls to boot. It appears that it’s just as well that you come down, now and then, for information to our town of Ballycleuch.’

“ ‘ Very true, Mrs. O’Rourke,’ says I ; ‘ and who is it that knows everything so well as yourself?’ You observe, Terence, that I just said everything contrary and *arce versa*, as they call it, to the contents of your letter ; for always recollect, my son, that if you would worm a secret out of a woman, you’ll do more by contradiction than you ever will by coaxing—so I went on : ‘ Anyhow, I think it’s a burning shame, Mrs. O’Rourke, for a gentleman

to bring over with him here from England a parcel of lazy English servants, when there's so many nice boys and girls here to attind upon them.'

" ' Now there you're all wrong again, Father M'Grath,' says she. ' Devil a soul has he brought from the other country, but has hired them all here. Arn't there Ella Flanagan for one maid, and Terence Driscol for a footman? and it's well that he looks in his new uniform, when he comes down for the newspapers; and arn't Moggy Cala there to cook the dinner, and pretty Mary Sullivan for a nurse for the babby as soon as it comes into the world?'"

" ' Is it Mary Sullivan, you mane?' says I; ' she that was married about three months back, and is so quick in child-getting, that she's all but ready to fall to pieces in this same time?'"

" ' It's exactly she,' says Mrs. O'Rourke; ' and do you know the reason?'"

" ' Devil a bit,' says I; ' how should I?'"

" ' Then it's just that she may send her own child away, and give her milk to the English babby that's coming; because the lady is too much of a lady to have a child hanging to her breast.'

“ ‘ But suppose Mary Sullivan’s child arn’t born till afterwards, how then ? ’ says I. ‘ Speak, Mrs. O’Rourke, for you’re a sensible woman.’

“ ‘ How then ? ’ says she. ‘ Och ! that’s all arranged ; for Mary says that she’ll be in bed a week before the lady, so that’s all right you’ll perceive, Father M’Grath.’

“ ‘ But don’t you perceive, sensible woman as you are, that a young woman, who is so much out of her reckoning as to have a child three months after her marriage, may make a little mistake in her lying-in arithmetic, Mrs. O’Rourke ?’

“ ‘ Never fear, Father M’Grath, Mary Sullivan will keep her word ; and sooner than disappoint the lady, and lose her place, she’ll just tumble down stairs, and won’t that put her to bed fast enough ?’

“ ‘ Well, that’s what I call a faithful good servant that earns her wages,’ says I ; ‘ so now I’ll just take another glass, Mrs. O’Rourke, and thank you too. Sure you’re the woman that knows everything, and a mighty pretty woman into the bargain.’

“ ‘ Let me alone now, Father M’Grath, and don’t be pinching me that way anyhow.’

“ ‘ It was only a big flea that I perceived

hopping on your gown, my darling, devil anything else.'

" ' Many thanks to you, father, for that same; but the next time you'd kill my fleas, just wait until they're in a *more dacent* situation.'

" ' Fleas are fleas, Mrs. O'Rourke, and we must catch 'em when we can, and how we can, and as we can, so no offence. A good night's rest to you, Mrs. O'Rourke—when do you mean to confess?'

" ' I've an idea that I've too many fleas about me to confess to you just now, Father M'Grath, and that's the truth on it. So a pleasant walk back to you.'

" ' So you'll perceive, my son, that having got all the information from Mrs. O'Rourke, it's back I went to Ballyhinch, till I heard it whispered that there were doings down at the old house at Ballycleuch. Off I set, and went to the house itself, as priests always ought to be welcomed at births and marriages, and deaths, being as you know of great use on such occasions—when who should open the door but Father O'Toole, the biggest rapparee of a priest in the whole of Ireland. Didn't he steal a horse, and only save his neck by benefit of

clergy? and did he ever give absolution to a young woman without making her sin over again? ‘What may be your pleasure here, Father M‘Grath?’ says he, holding the door with his hand.

“ ‘Only just to call and hear what’s going on.’

“ ‘For the matter of that,’ says he, ‘I’ll just tell you that we’re all going on very well; but ar’n’t you ashamed of yourself, Father M‘Grath, to come here to interfere with my flock, knowing that I confess the house altogether?’

“ ‘That’s as may be,’ says I; ‘but I only wanted to know what the lady had brought into the world.’

“ ‘It’s a *child*,’ says he.

“ ‘Indeed!’ says I; ‘many thanks for the information: and pray what is it that Mary Sullivan has brought into the world?’

“ ‘That’s a *child*, too,’ says he; ‘and now that you know all about it, good evening to you, Father M‘Grath.’ And the ugly brute slammed the door right in my face.

“ ‘Who stole a horse?’ cries I; but he didn’t hear me—more’s the pity.

“ So you’ll perceive, my dear boy, that I have found out something, at all events, but not

so much as I intended ; for I'll prove to Father O'Toole, that he's no match for Father M'Grath. But what I find out must be reserved for another letter, seeing that it's not possible to tell it to you in this same. Praties look well, but somehow or another *clothes* don't grow upon trees in ould Ireland ; and one of your half-quarterly bills, or a little prize-money, if it found its way here, would add not a little to the respectability of the family appearance. Even my cassock is becoming too *holy* for a parish priest ; not that I care about it so much, only father O'Toole, the baste ! had on a bran new one—not that I believe that he ever came honestly by it, as I have by mine—but, get it how you may, a new gown always looks better than an ould one, that's certain. So no more at present from your loving friend and confessor,

“ URTAGH M'GRATH.”

“ Now, you'll observe, Peter,” said O'Brien, after I had read the letter, “ that, as I supposed, your uncle meant mischief when he went over to Ireland. Whether the children are both boys or both girls, or your uncle's is a boy, and the other is a girl, there's no knowing at present. If an exchange was required, it's

made, that's certain ; but I will write again to Father M'Grath, and insist upon his finding out the truth, if possible. Have you any letter from your father ?”

“ None, I am sorry to say. I wish I had, for he would not have failed to speak on the subject.”

“ Well, never mind, it's no use dreaming over the matter, we must do our best when we get to England ourselves, and in the mean time trust to Father M'Grath. I'll go and write to him while my mind's full of it.” O'Brien wrote his letter, and the subject was not started again.

CHAPTER XVII.

Captain Kearney's illness—He makes his will and devises sundry Châteaux en Espagne, for the benefit of those concerned—The legacy duty in this instance not ruinous—He signs, seals, and dies.

THE captain, as was his custom, went on shore, and took up his quarters at a friend's house; that is to say, the house of an acquaintance, or any polite gentleman who would ask him to take a dinner and a bed. This was quite sufficient for Captain Kearney, who would fill his portmanteau, and take up his quarters without thinking of leaving them until the ship sailed, or some more advantageous invitation was given. This conduct in England would have very much trespassed upon our ideas of hospitality; but in our foreign settlements and colonies, where the society is confined and novelty is desirable, a person who could amuse like Captain Kear-

ney was generally welcome, let him stay as long as he pleased. All sailors agree in asserting that Halifax is one of the most delightful ports in which a ship can anchor. Everybody is hospitable, cheerful and willing to amuse and be amused. It is, therefore, a very bad place to send a ship to if you wish her to refit in a hurry, unless indeed the admiral is there to watch over your daily progress, and a sharp commissioner to expedite your motions in the dock-yard. The admiral was there when we arrived, and we should not have lain there long, had not the health of Captain Kearney, by the time that we were ready for sea, been so seriously affected, that the doctor was of opinion that he could not sail. Another frigate was sent to our intended cruising ground, and we lay idle in port. But we consoled ourselves; if we did not make prize-money, at all events, we were very happy, and the major part of the officers very much in love.

We had remained in Halifax harbour about three weeks, when a very great change for the worse took place in Captain Kearney's disease. Disease indeed it could hardly be called. He had been long suffering from the insidious attacks of a hot climate, and though repeatedly

advised to invalid, he never would consent. His constitution appeared now to be breaking up. In a few days he was so ill, that, at the request of the naval surgeons, he consented to be removed to the hospital, where he could command more comforts than in any private house. He had not been at the hospital more than two days, when he sent for me, and stated his wish that I should remain with him. "You know, Peter, that you are a cousin of mine, and one likes to have one's relations near one when we are sick, so bring your traps on shore. The doctor has promised me a nice little room for yourself, and you shall come and sit with me all day." I certainly had no objection to remain with him, because I considered it my duty so to do, and I must say that there was no occasion for me to make any efforts to entertain him, as he always entertained me; but I could not help seriously reflecting, and feeling much shocked at a man, lying in so dangerous a state—for the doctors had pronounced his recovery to be impossible—still continuing a system of falsehood during the whole day, without intermission. But it really appeared in him to be innate, and, as Swinburne said, "if he told truth, it was entirely by mistake."

“ Peter,” said he, one day, “ there’s a great draught. Shut the door, and put on some more coals.”

“ The fire does not draw well, sir,” replied I, “ without the door is open.”

“ It’s astonishing how little people understand the nature of these things. When I built my house called Walcot Abbey, there was not a chimney would draw; I sent for the architect and abused him, but he could not manage it: I was obliged to do it myself.”

“ Did you manage it, sir?”

“ Manage it—I think I did. The first time I lighted the fire, I opened the door, and the draught was so great, that my little boy William, who was standing in the current of air, would have gone right up the chimney, if I had not caught him by the petticoats; as it was, his frock was on fire.”

“ Why, sir, it must have been as bad as a hurricane !”

“ No, no, not quite so bad—but it showed what a little knowledge of philosophical arrangement could effect. We have no hurricanes in England, Peter, but I have seen a very pretty whirlwind when I was at Walcot Abbey.”

“ Indeed, sir.”

“ Yes, it cut four square haystacks quite round, and I lost twenty tons of hay ; it twisted the iron lamp-post at the entrance just as a porpoise twists a harpoon, and took up a sow and her litter of pigs that were about a hundred yards from the back of the house, and landed them safe over the house, to the front, with the exception of the old sow putting her shoulder out.”

“ Indeed, sir.”

“ Yes, but what was strange, there were a great many rats in the hayrick, and up they went with the hay. Now, Peter, by the laws of gravitation, they naturally come down before the hay, and I was walking with my greyhound, or rather terrier, and after one coming down close to her, which she killed, it was quite ridiculous to witness her looking up in the air and watching for the others.”

“ A greyhound did you say, sir, or a terrier ?”

“ Both, Peter ; the fact is, she had been a greyhound, but breaking her fore-leg against a stump, when coursing, I had the other three amputated as well, and then she made a capital terrier. She was a great favourite of mine.”

“ Well,” observed I, “ I have read something like that in Baron Munchausen.”

“ Mr. Simple,” said the captain, turning on his elbow and looking me severely in the face, “ what do you mean to imply ?”

“ O nothing, sir, but I have read a story of that kind.”

“ Most probably ; the great art of invention is to found it upon facts. There are some people who out of a mole-hill will make a mountain ; and facts and fiction become so blended now-a-days, that even truth becomes a matter of doubt.”

“ Very true, sir,” replied I ; and as he did not speak for some minutes, I ventured to bring my Bible to his bedside, as if I was reading it to myself.

“ What are you reading, Peter ?” said he.

“ Only a chapter in the Bible, sir,” said I. “ Would you like that I should read aloud ?”

“ Yes, I’m very fond of the Bible—it’s the book of *truth*. Peter, read me about Jacob, and his weathering Esau with a mess of pottage, and obtaining his father’s blessing.” I could not help thinking it singular that he should select a portion in which, for divine reasons, a lie was crowned with success and reward.

When I had finished it, he asked me to read something more ; I turned over to the Acts of

the Apostles, and commenced the chapter in which Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead. When I had finished, he observed very seriously, "That is a very good lesson for young people, Peter, and points out that you never should swerve from the truth. Recollect, as your motto, Peter, to 'tell truth and shame the devil.'"

After this observation I laid down the book, as it appeared to me that he was quite unaware of his propensity; and without a sense of your fault, how can repentance and amendment be expected? He became more feeble and exhausted every day, and, at last, was so weak that he could scarcely raise himself in his bed. One afternoon he said, "Peter, I shall make my will, not that I am going to kick the bucket just yet; but still it is every man's duty to set his house in order, and it will amuse me; so fetch pen and paper, and come and sit down by me."

I did as he requested.

"Write, Peter, that I, Anthony George William Charles Huskisson Kearney, (my father's name was Anthony, Peter; I was christened George after the present Regent, William and Charles after Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, who were my sponsors; Huskisson is the name of

my great uncle, whose property devolves to me ; he's eighty-three now, so he can't last long,)—have you written down that ?”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Being in sound mind, do hereby make my last will and testament, revoking all former wills.”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ I bequeath to my dearly beloved wife, Augusta Charlotte Kearney, (she was named after the Queen and Princess Augusta, who held her at the baptismal font,) all my household furniture, books, pictures, plate, and houses, for her own free use and will, and to dispose of at her pleasure upon her demise. Is that down ?”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Also, the interest of all my money in the three per cents. reduced, and in the long annuities, and the balance in my agent's hands, for her natural life. At her death to be divided into equal portions between my two children, William Mohamed Potemkin Kearney, and Caroline Anastasia Kearney. Is that down ?”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Well, then, Peter, now for my real property. My estate in Kent, (let me see, what is the name of it ?)—Walcot Abbey, my three farms in the

Vale of Aylesbury, and the marsh lands in Norfolk, I bequeath to my two children aforementioned, the proceeds of the same to be laid up, deducting all necessary expenses for their education, for their sole use and benefit. Is that down?"

"Not yet, sir—'use and benefit.' Now it is, sir."

"Until they come to the age of twenty-one years; or in case of my daughter, until she marries with the consent of my executors, then to be equally and fairly valued and divided between them. You observe, Peter, I never make any difference between girls and boys—a good father will leave one child as much as another. Now I'll take my breath a little."

I was really astonished. It was well known that Captain Kearney had nothing but his pay, and that it was the hopes of prize-money to support his family, which had induced him to stay out so long in the West Indies. It was laughable; yet I could not laugh: there was a melancholy feeling at such a specimen of insanity, which prevented me.

"Now, Peter, we'll go on," said Captain Kearney, after a pause of a few minutes. "I have a few legacies to bequeath. First, to all

my servants 50*l.* each, and two suits of mourning; to my nephew, Thomas Kearney, of Kearney Hall, Yorkshire, I bequeath the sword presented me by the Grand Sultan. I promised it to him, and, although we have quarrelled, and not spoken for years, I always keep my word. The plate presented me by the merchants and underwriters of Lloyds, I leave to my worthy friend, the Duke of Newcastle. Is that down?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well; my snuff-box, presented me by Prince Potemkin, I bequeath to Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin; and, also, I release him from the mortgage which I hold over his property of the Madeleine Islands, in North America. By-the-bye, say, and further, I bequeath to him the bag of snuff presented to me by the Dey of Algiers; he may as well have the snuff as he has the snuff-box. Is that down?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well then, now, Peter, I must leave you something."

"O, never mind me," replied I.

"No, no, Peter, I must not forget my cousin. Let me see; you shall have my fighting sword. A real good one, I can tell you. I once fought

a duel with it at Palermo, and ran a Sicilian Prince so clean through the body, and it held so tight, that we were obliged to send for a pair of post-horses to pull it out again. Put that down as a legacy for my cousin, Peter Simple. I believe that is all. Now for my executors; and I request my particular friends, the Earl of Londonderry, the Marquis of Chandos, and Mr. John Lubbock, banker, to be my executors, and leave each of them the sum of one thousand pounds for their trouble, and in token of regard. That will do, Peter. Now, as I have left so much real property, it is necessary that there should be three witnesses; so call in two more, and let me sign in your presence."

This order was obeyed, and this strange will duly attested; for I hardly need say, that even the presents he had pretended to receive were purchased by himself at different times; but such was the force of his ruling passion even to the last. Mr. Phillott and O'Brien used to come and see him, as did occasionally some of the other officers, and he was always cheerful and merry, and seemed to be quite indifferent about his situation, although fully aware of it. His

stories, if anything, became more marvellous, as no one ventured to express a doubt as to their credibility.

I had remained in the hospital about a week, when Captain Kearney was evidently dying: the doctor came, felt his pulse, and gave it as his opinion that he could not outlive the day. This was on a Friday, and there certainly was every symptom of dissolution. He was so exhausted, that he could scarcely articulate; his feet were cold, and his eyes appeared glazed, and turning upwards. The doctor remained an hour, felt his pulse again, shook his head, and said to me in a low voice, "He is quite gone." As soon as the doctor quitted the room, Captain Kearney opened his eyes, and beckoned me to him. "He's a confounded fool, Peter," said he: "he thinks I am slipping my wind now—but I know better; going I am, 'tis true—but I sha'n't die till next Thursday." Strange to say, from that moment he rallied, and although it was reported that he was dead, and the admiral had signed the acting order for his successor, the next morning, to the astonishment of everybody, Captain Kearney was still alive. He continued in this state, between life and death, until the Thursday next, the day

on which he asserted that he would die—and, on that morning, he was evidently sinking fast. Towards noon, his breathing became much oppressed and irregular, and he was evidently dying; the rattle in his throat commenced, and I watched at his bedside, waiting for his last gasp, when he again opened his eyes, and beckoning me, with an effort, to put my head close to him to hear what he had to say, he contrived, in a sort of gurgling whisper, and with much difficulty, to utter—“ Peter, I’m going now—not that the rattle—in my throat—is a sign of death :—for I once knew a man—to live with—the rattle in his throat—for six weeks.” He fell back and expired, having perhaps, at his last gasp, told the greatest lie of his whole life.

Thus died this most extraordinary character, who, in most other points, commanded respect; he was a kind man, and a good officer; but from the idiosyncrasy of his disposition, whether from habit or from nature, could not speak the truth. I say from *nature*, because I have witnessed the vice of stealing equally strong, and never to be eradicated. It was in a young messmate of good family, and who was supplied with money to almost any extent: he was one

of the most generous, open-hearted lads that I ever knew; he would offer his purse, or the contents of his chest, to any of his messmates; and, at the same time, would steal everything that he could lay his hands upon. I have known him watch for hours, to steal what could be of no use to him, as, for instance, an *odd* shoe, and that much too small for his foot. What he stole he would give away the very next day; but to check it, was impossible. It was so well known, that if anything was missed, we used first to apply to his chest to see if it was there, and usually found the article in question. He appeared to be wholly insensible to shame upon this subject, though in every other he showed no want of feeling or of honour; and, strange to say, he never covered his theft with a lie. After vain attempts to cure him of this propensity, he was dismissed the service as incorrigible.

Captain Kearney was buried in the churchyard with the usual military honours. In his desk we found directions, in his own hand, relative to his funeral, and the engraving on his tombstone. In these, he stated his age to be thirty-one years. If this was correct, Captain Kearney, from the time that he had been in the

service of his country, must have entered the navy just *four months before* he was born. It was unfortunate that he commenced the inscription with "Here lies Captain Kearney," &c. &c. His tombstone had not been set up twenty-four hours, before somebody, who knew his character, put a dash under one word, as emphatic as it was true of the living man, "Here *lies* Captain Kearney."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Captain Horton—Gloomy news from home—Get over head and ears in the water, and find myself afterwards growing one way, and my clothes another—Though neither as rich as a Jew, or as large as a camel, I pass through my examination, which my brother candidates think passing strange.

THE day after Captain Kearney's decease, his acting successor made his appearance on board. The character of Captain Horton was well known to us from the complaints made by the officers belonging to his ship, of his apathy and indolence; indeed, he went by the *sobriquet* of "the Sloth." It certainly was very annoying to his officers to witness so many opportunities of prize-money and distinction thrown away through the indolence of his disposition. Captain Horton was a young man of family who had advanced rapidly in the service from interest, and from occasionally distinguishing

himself. In the several cutting-out expeditions, on which he had not volunteered but had been ordered, he had shown, not only courage, but a remarkable degree of coolness in danger and difficulty, which had gained him much approbation: but it was said, that this coolness arose from his very fault—an unaccountable laziness. He would walk away, as it were, from the enemy's fire, when others would hasten, merely because he was so apathetic that he would not exert himself to run. In one cutting-out expedition in which he distinguished himself, it is said, that having to board a very high vessel, and that in a shower of grape and musketry, when the boat dashed alongside, and the men were springing up, he looked up at the height of the vessel's sides, and exclaimed with a look of despair, "My God! must we really climb up that vessel's decks?" When he had gained the deck, and became excited, he then proved how little fear had to do with the remark, the captain of the ship falling by his hand, as he fought in advance of his own men. But this peculiarity, which in a junior officer was of little consequence, and a subject of mirth, in a captain became of a very serious nature. The admiral

was aware how often he had neglected to annoy or capture the enemy when he might have done it, and by such neglect, Captain Horton infringed one of the articles of war, the punishment awarded to which infringement is *death*. His appointment, therefore, to the Sanglier was as annoying to us, as his quitting his former ship was agreeable to those on board of her.

As it happened, it proved of little consequence; the admiral had instructions from home to advance Captain Horton to the first vacancy, which of course he was obliged to comply with; but not wishing to keep on the station an officer who would not exert himself, he resolved to send her to England with despatches, and retain the other frigate which had been ordered home, and which we had been sent up to replace. We therefore heard it announced with feelings of joy, mingled with regret, that we were immediately to proceed to England. For my part, I was glad of it. I had now served my time as midshipman, to within five months, and I thought that I had a better chance of being made in England than abroad. I was also very anxious to go home, for family reasons, which I have already explained. In a fortnight we sailed with several

vessels, and directions to take charge of a large convoy from Quebec, which was to meet us off the island of St. John's. In a few days we joined our convoy, and with a fair wind bore up for England. The weather soon became very bad, and we were scudding before a heavy gale, under bare poles. Our captain seldom quitted the cabin, but remained there on a sofa, stretched at his length, reading a novel, or dozing, as he found most agreeable.

I recollect a circumstance which occurred, which will prove the apathy of his disposition, and how unfit he was to command so fine a frigate. We had been scudding three days, when the weather became much worse. O'Brien, who had the middle watch, went down to report that "it blew very hard."

"Very well," said the captain; "let me know if it blows harder."

In about an hour more the gale increased, and O'Brien went down again. "It blows much harder, Captain, Horton."

"Very well," answered Captain Horton, turning in his cot; "you may call me again when it *blows harder*."

At about six bells the gale was at its height, and the wind roared in its fury. Down went

O'Brien again. "It blows tremendous hard now, Captain Horton."

"Well, well, if the weather becomes worse—." "It can't be worse," interrupted O'Brien, "it's impossible to blow harder."

"Indeed! Well, then" replied the captain, "let me know when *it lulls*."

In the morning watch a similar circumstance took place. Mr. Phillott, went down, and said that several of the convoy were out of sight astern. "Shall we heave-to, Captain Horton?"

"O no," replied he, "she will be so uneasy. Let me know if you lose sight of any more."

In another hour, the first lieutenant reported that "there were very few to be seen."

"Very well, Mr. Phillott," replied the captain, turning round to sleep; "let me know if you lose any more."

Some time elapsed, and the first lieutenant reported, "that they were all out of sight."

"Very well, then," said the captain; "call me when you see them again."

This was not very likely to take place, as we were going twelve knots an hour, and running away from them as fast as we could, so the captain remained undisturbed until he thought

proper to get up to breakfast. Indeed, we never saw any more of our convoy, but taking the gale with us, in fifteen days anchored in Plymouth Sound. The orders came down for the frigate to be paid off, all standing, and recommissioned. I received letters from my father, in which he congratulated me at my name being mentioned in Captain Kearney's despatches, and requested me to come home as soon as I could. The admiral allowed my name to be put down on the books of the guardship, that I might not lose my time, and then gave me two months' leave of absence. I bade farewell to my shipmates, shook hands with O'Brien, who proposed to go over to Ireland previous to his applying for another ship, and, with my pay in my pocket, set off in the Plymouth mail, and in three days was once more in the arms of my affectionate mother, and warmly greeted by my father, and the remainder of my family.

Once more with my family, I must acquaint the reader with what had occurred since my departure. My eldest sister, Lucy, had married an officer in the army, a Captain Fielding, and his regiment having been ordered out to India, had accompanied her husband, and

letters had been received just before my return, announcing their safe arrival at Ceylon. My second sister, Mary, had also been engaged to be married, and from her infancy was of extremely delicate health. She was very handsome, and much admired. Her intended husband was a baronet of good family; but unfortunately she caught a cold at the assize ball, and went off in a decline. She died about two months before my arrival, and the family were in deep mourning. My third sister, Ellen, was still unmarried; she, also, was a very beautiful girl, and now seventeen. My mother's constitution was much shaken by the loss of my sister Mary, and the separation from her eldest child. As for my father, even the loss of his daughter appeared to be wholly forgotten in the unwelcome intelligence which he had received, that my uncle's wife had been delivered of a *son*, which threw him out of the anticipated titles and estates of my grandfather. It was indeed a house of mourning. My mother's grief I respected, and tried all I could to console her: that of my father was so evidently worldly, and so at variance with his clerical profession, that I must acknowledge, I felt more of anger at it than sorrow. He had become morose and sul-

len, harsh to those around him, and not so kind to my mother as her state of mind and health made it his duty to be, even if inclination were wanted. He seldom passed any portion of the day with her, and in the evening she went to bed very early, so that there was little communication between them. My sister was a great consolation to her, and so I hope was I; she often said so, as she embraced me, and the tears rolled down her cheeks, and I could not help surmising that those tears were doubled from the coolness and indifference, if not unkindness, with which my father behaved to her. As for my sister, she was an angel; and as I witnessed her considerate attentions to my mother, and the total forgetfulness of self which she displayed, (so different from my father, who was all self,) I often thought what a treasure she would prove to any man who was fortunate enough to win her love. Such was the state of my family when I returned to it.

I had been at home about a week, when one evening, after dinner, I submitted to my father the propriety of trying to obtain my promotion.

“I can do nothing for you, Peter; I have no interest whatever,” replied he moodily.

“I do not think that much is required, sir,” replied I; “my time will be served on the 20th of next month. If I pass, which I trust I shall be able to do, my name having been mentioned in the public despatches will render it a point of no very great difficulty to obtain my commission at the request of my grandfather.”

“Yes, your grandfather might succeed, I have no doubt; but I think you have little chance now in that quarter. My brother has a son, and we are thrown out. You are not aware, Peter, how selfish people are, and how little they will exert themselves for their relations. Your grandfather has never invited me, since the announcement of my brother’s increase to his family. Indeed, I have never been near him, for I know that it is of no use.”

“I must think otherwise of Lord Privilege, my dear father, until your opinion is confirmed by his own conduct. That I am not so much an object of interest, I grant; but still he was very kind, and appeared to be partial to me.”

“Well, well, you can try all you can; but you’ll soon see of what stuff this world is made, I am sure I hope it will be so, for what is to

become of you children if I die, I do not know; —I have saved little or nothing. And now all my prospects are blasted by this——” and my father dashed his fist upon the table in a manner by no means clerical, and with a look very unworthy of an apostle.

I am sorry that I must thus speak of my father, but I must not disguise the truth. Still, I must say, there was much in extenuation of his conduct. He had always a dislike to the profession of the church: his ambition, as a young man, had been to enter the army, for which service he was much better qualified; but, as it has been the custom for centuries to entail all the property of the aristocracy upon the eldest son, and leave the other brothers to be supported by the state, or rather by the people, who are taxed for their provision, my father was not permitted to follow the bent of his own inclination. An elder brother had already selected the army as his profession, and it was therefore decided that my father should enter the church; and thus it is that we have had, and still have, so many people in that profession, who are not only totally unfit for, but who actually disgrace, their calling. The law of primogeniture is beset with evils and in-

justice; yet without it, the aristocracy of a country must sink into insignificance. It appears to me, that as long as the people of a country are content to support the younger sons of the nobility, it is well that the aristocracy should be held up as a third estate, and a link between the sovereign and the people; but that if the people are either too poor, or are unwilling to be so taxed, they have a right to refuse taxation for such purposes, and to demand that the law of primogeniture should be abolished.

I remained at home until my time was complete, and then set off for Plymouth to undergo my examination. The passing-day had been fixed by the admiral for the Friday, and, as I arrived on Wednesday, I amused myself during the day, walking about the dock-yard, and trying all I could to obtain further information in my profession. On the Thursday, a party of soldiers from the dépôt were embarking at the landing-place in men-of-war boats, and, as I understood, were about to proceed to India. I witnessed the embarkation, and waited till they shoved off, and then walked to the anchor wharf to ascertain the weights of the respective anchors

of the different classes of vessels in the king's service.

I had not been there long, when I was attracted by the squabbling created by a soldier, who, it appeared, had quitted the ranks to run up to the tap in the dock-yard to obtain liquor. He was very drunk, and was followed by a young woman with a child in her arms, who was endeavouring to pacify him.

"Now be quiet, Patrick, jewel," said she, clinging to him, "sure it's enough that you've left the ranks, and will come to disgrace when you get on board. Now, be quiet, Patrick, and let us ask for a boat, and then perhaps the officer will think it was all a mistake, and let you off aisy; and sure I'll spake to Mr. O'Rourke, and he's a kind man."

"Out wid you, you cratur, it is Mr. O'Rourke you'd be having a conversation wid, and he be chucking you under that chin of your's. Out wid you, Mary, and lave me to find my way on board. Is it a boat I want, when I can swim like St. Patrick, wid my head under my arm, if it wasn't on my shoulders? At all events, I can wid my nappersack and musket to boot."

The young woman cried, and tried to restrain



him, but he broke from her, and running down to the wharf, dashed off into the water. The young woman ran to the edge of the wharf, perceived him sinking, and shrieking with despair, threw up her arms in her agony. The child fell, struck on the edge of the piles, turned over, and before I could catch hold of it, sank into the sea. "The child! the child!" burst forth in another wild scream, and the poor creature lay at my feet in violent fits. I looked over, the child had disappeared; but the soldier was still struggling with his head above water. He sank and rose again—a boat was pulling towards him, but he was quite exhausted. He threw back his arms as if in despair, and was about disappearing under the wave, when, no longer able to restrain myself, I leaped off the high wharf and swam to his assistance, just in time to lay hold of him as he was sinking for the last time. I had not been in the water a quarter of a minute before the boat came up to us, and dragged us on board. The soldier was exhausted and speechless. I, of course, was only very wet. The boat rowed to the landing-place at my request, and we were both put on shore. The knapsack which was fixed on the

soldier's back, and his regimentals, indicated that he belonged to the regiment just embarked; and I stated my opinion, that as soon as he was a little recovered, he had better be taken on board. As the boat which picked us up was one of the men-of-war boats, the officer, who had been embarking the troops, and had been sent on shore again to know if there were any yet left behind, consented. In a few minutes the soldier recovered, and was able to sit up and speak, and I only waited to ascertain the state of the poor young woman whom I had left on the wharf. In a few minutes she was led to us by the warder, and the scene between her and her husband was most affecting. When she had become a little composed, she turned round to me, where I stood dripping wet, and, intermingled with lamentation for the child, showering down emphatic blessings on my head, inquired my name. "Give it to me!" she cried; "give it to me on paper, in writing, that I may wear it next my heart, read and kiss it every day of my life, and never forget to pray for you, and to bless you!"

"I'll tell it you. My name——"

"Nay, write it down for me—write it down.

Sure you'll not refuse me. All the saints bless you, dear young man, for saving a poor woman from despair !”

The officer commanding the boat handed me a pencil and a card ; I wrote my name and gave it to the poor woman ; she took my hand as I gave it her, kissed the card repeatedly, and put it into her bosom. The officer, impatient to shove off, ordered her husband into the boat—she followed, clinging to him, wet as he was—the boat shoved off, and I hastened up to the inn to dry my clothes. I could not help observing, at the time, how the fear of a greater evil will absorb all consideration for a minor. Satisfied that her husband had not perished, she had hardly once appeared to remember that she had lost her child.

I had only brought one suit of clothes with me : they were in very good condition when I arrived, but salt water plays the devil with a uniform. I lay in bed until they were dry ; but when I put them on again, not being before too large for me, for I grew very fast, they were now shrunk and shrivelled up, so as to be much too small. My wrists appeared below the sleeves of my coat—my trowsers had shrunk half way up to my knees—the buttons were all

tarnished, and altogether I certainly did not wear the appearance of a gentlemanly, smart midshipman. I would have ordered another suit, but the examination was to take place at ten o'clock the next morning, and there was no time. I was therefore obliged to appear as I was, on the quarter-deck of the line-of-battle ship, on board of which the passing was to take place. Many others were there to undergo the same ordeal, all strangers to me, and, as I perceived by their nods and winks to each other, as they walked up and down in their smart clothes, not at all inclined to make my acquaintance.

There were many before me on the list, and our hearts beat every time that a name was called, and the owner of it walked aft into the cabin. Some returned with jocund faces, and our hopes mounted with the anticipation of similar good fortune; others came out melancholy and crest-fallen, and then the expression of their countenances was communicated to our own, and we quailed with fear and apprehension. I have no hesitation in asserting, that although "passing" may be a proof of being qualified, "not passing" is certainly no proof to the contrary. I have known many of the

cleverest young men turned back, (while others of inferior abilities have succeeded,) merely from the feeling of awe occasioned by the peculiarity of the situation; and it is not to be wondered at, when it is considered that all the labour and exertion of six years are at stake at this appalling moment. At last my name was called, and, almost breathless from anxiety, I entered the cabin, where I found myself in presence of the three captains who were to decide whether I were fit to hold a commission in his Majesty's service. My logs and certificates were examined and approved; my time calculated and allowed to be correct. The questions in navigation which were put to me were very few, for the best of all possible reasons, that most captains in his Majesty's service know little or nothing of navigation. During their servitude as midshipmen, they learn it by *rote*, without being aware of the principles upon which the calculations they use are founded. As lieutenants, their services as to navigation are seldom required, and they rapidly forget all about it. As captains, their whole remnant of mathematical knowledge consists in being able to set down the ship's position on the chart. As for navigating the ship, the master is answer-

able; and the captains not being responsible themselves, they trust entirely to his reckoning. Of course there are exceptions, but what I state is the fact; and if an order from the Admiralty was given, that all captains should pass again, although they might acquit themselves very well in seamanship, nineteen out of twenty would be turned back when they were questioned in navigation. It is from the knowledge of this fact that I think the service is injured by the present system, and the captain should be held *wholly* responsible for the navigation of his ship. It has been long known that the officers of every other maritime state are more scientific than our own, which is easily explained, from the responsibility not being invested in our captains. The origin of masters in our service is singular. When England first became a maritime power, ships for the king's service were found by the Cinque Ports and other parties—the fighting part of the crew was composed of soldiers sent on board. All the vessels at that time had a crew of sailors, with a master to navigate the vessel. During our bloody naval engagements with the Dutch, the same system was acted upon. I think it was the Earl of Sandwich, of whom it is stated, that

his ship being in a sinking state, he took a boat to hoist his flag on board of another vessel in the fleet, but a shot cutting the boat in two, and the *weight of his armour* bearing him down, the Earl of Sandwich perished. But to proceed.

As soon as I had answered several questions satisfactorily, I was desired to stand up. The captain who had interrogated me on navigation, was very grave in his demeanour towards me, but at the same time not uncivil. During his examination, he was not interfered with by the other two, who only undertook the examination in "seamanship." The captain who now desired me to stand up, spoke in a very harsh tone, and quite frightened me. I stood up pale and trembling, for I augured no good from this commencement. Several questions in seamanship were put to me, which I have no doubt I answered in a very lame way, for I cannot even now recollect what I said.

"I thought so," observed the captain; "I judged as much from your appearance. An officer who is so careless of his dress, as not even to put on a decent coat when he appears at his examination, generally turns out an idle fellow, and no seaman. One would think you had

served all your time in a cutter, or a ten-gun brig, instead of dashing frigates. Come, sir, I'll give you one more chance."

I was so hurt at what the captain said, that I could not control my feelings. I replied, with a quivering lip, "that I had had no time to order another uniform,"—and I burst into tears.

"Indeed, Burrows, you are rather too harsh," said the third captain; "the lad is frightened. Let him sit down and compose himself for a little while. Sit down, Mr. Simple, and we will try you again directly."

I sat down, checking my grief and trying to recall my scattered senses. The captains, in the mean time, turning over the logs to pass away the time; the one who had questioned me in navigation reading the Plymouth newspaper, which had a few minutes before been brought on board and sent into the cabin. "Heh! what's this? I say, Burrows,—Keats, look here," and he pointed to a paragraph. "Mr. Simple, may I ask whether it was you who saved the soldier who leaped off the wharf yesterday?"

"Yes, sir," replied I, "and that's the reason why my uniforms are so shabby. I spoilt

them then, and had no time to order others. I did not like to say why they were spoilt." I saw a change in the countenances of all the three, and it gave me courage. Indeed, now that my feelings had found vent, I was no longer under any apprehension.

"Come, Mr. Simple, stand up again," said the captain kindly, "that is, if you feel sufficiently composed; if not, we will wait a little longer. Don't be afraid, we *wish* to pass you."

I was not afraid, and stood up immediately. I answered every question satisfactorily, and finding that I did so, they put more difficult ones. "Very good, very good indeed, Mr. Simple; now let me ask you one more; it's seldom done in the service, and perhaps you may not be able to answer it. Do you know how to *club-haul* a ship?"

"Yes, sir," replied I, having as the reader may recollect, witnessed the manœuvre when serving under poor Captain Savage, and I immediately stated how it was to be done.

"That is sufficient, Mr. Simple. I wish to ask you no more questions. I thought at first you were a careless officer and no seaman: I now find you are a good seaman and a gallant

young man. Do you wish to ask any more questions?" continued he, turning to the two others.

They replied in the negative; my passing certificate was signed, and the captains did me the honour to shake hands with me, and wish me speedy promotion. Thus ended happily this severe trial to my poor nerves; and, as I came out of the cabin, no one could have imagined that I had been in such distress within, when they beheld the joy that irradiated my countenance.

CHAPTER XIX.

Is a chapter of plots—Catholic casuistry in a new cassock—Plotting promotes promotion—A peasant's love, and a peer's peevishness—Prospects of prosperity.

As soon as I arrived at the hotel, I sent for a Plymouth paper, and cut out the paragraph which had been of such importance to me in my emergency, and the next morning returned home to receive the congratulations of my family. I found a letter from O'Brien, which had arrived the day before. It was as follows ;—

“ MY DEAR PETER,

“ Some people, they say, are lucky to ‘have a father born before them,’ because they are helped on in the world—upon which principle, mine was born *after* me, that's certain; how-

ever, that can't be helped. I found all my family well and hearty: but they all shook a cloth in the wind with respect to toggery. As for Father M'Grath's cassock, he didn't complain of it without reason. It was the ghost of a garment; but, however, with the blessing of God, my last quarterly bill, and the help of a tailor, we have had a regular refit, and the ancient family of the O'Briens of Ballyhinch are now rigged from stem to stern. My two sisters are both to be spliced to young squireens in the neighbourhood; it appears that they only waited for a decent town gown to go to the church in. They will be turned off next Friday, and I only wish, Peter, you were here to dance at the weddings. Never mind, I'll dance for you and for myself too. In the meantime, I'll just tell you what Father M'Grath and I have been doing, all about and consarnin' that thief of an uncle of yours.

“It's very little or nothing at all that Fâther M'Grath did before I came back, seeing as how Father O'Toole had a new cassock, and Father M'Grath's was so shabby that he couldn't face him under such a disadvantage; but still Father M'Grath spied about him, and had several hints from here and from there, all of which,

when I came to add them up, amounted to just nothing at all.

“ But since I came home, we have been busy. Father M’Grath went down to Ballycleugh, as bold as a lion in his new clothing, swearing that he’d lead Father O’Toole by the nose for slamming the door in his face, and so he would have done, if he could have found him; but as he wasn’t to be found, Father M’Grath came back again just as wise, and quite as brave, as he went out.

“ So, Peter, I just took a walk that way myself, and, as I surrounded the old house where your uncle had taken up his quarters, who should I meet but the little girl, Ella Flanagan, who was in his service; and I said to myself, ‘ there’s two ways of obtaining things in this world, one is for love, and the other is for money.’ The O’Briens are better off in the first article than in the last, as most of their countrymen are, so I’ve been spending it very freely in your service, Peter.

“ ‘ Sure,’ says I, ‘ you are the little girl that my eyes were ever looking upon when last I was this way.’ ”

“ ‘ And who are you?’ says she.

“ ‘ Lieutenant O’Brien, of his Majesty’s ser-

vice, just come home for a minute to look out for a wife,' says I; 'and it's one about your make, and shape, and discretion, that would please my fancy.'

"And then I praised her eyes, and her nose, and her forehead, and so downwards, until I came to the soles of her feet; and asked her leave to see her again, and when she would meet me in the wood and tell me her mind. At first, she thought (sure enough) that I couldn't be in earnest, but I swore by all the saints that she was the prettiest girl in the parts—and so she is altogether—and then she listened to my blarney. The devil a word did I say about your uncle or your aunt, or Father M'Grath, that she might not suspect, for I've an idea that they're all in the story. I only talked about my love for her pretty self, and that blinded her, as it will all women, 'cute as they may be.

"And now, Peter, it's three weeks last Sunday, that I've been bespeaking this poor girl for your sake, and my conscience tells me that it's not right to make the poor crature fond of me, seeing as how that I don't care a fig for her in the way of a wife, and in any other way it would be the ruin of the poor thing. I have

spoken to Father M'Grath on the subject, who says, 'that we may do evil that good may come, and, that if she has been a party to the deceit, it's nothing but proper that she should be punished in this world, and that will, perhaps, save her in the next;' still I don't like it, Peter, and it's only for you among the living that I'd do such a thing; for the poor creature now hangs upon me so fondly, and talks about the wedding-day; and tells me long stories about the connexions which have taken place between the O'Flanagans and the O'Briens, times bygone, when they were all in their glory. Yesterday, as we sat in the wood, with her arm round my waist, 'Ella, dear,' says I, 'who are these people that you stay with?' And then she told me all she knew about their history, and how Mary Sullivan was a nurse to the baby.

" 'And what is the baby?' says I.

" 'A boy, sure,' says she.

" 'And Sullivan's baby?'

" 'That's a girl.'

" 'And is Mary Sullivan there now?'

" 'No,' says she; 'it's yestreen she left with her husband and baby, to join the regiment that's going out to Ingy.'

" 'Yesterday she left?' says I, starting up.

“ ‘ Yes,’ replies she, ‘ and what do you care about them?’

“ ‘ It’s very much I care,’ replied I, ‘ for a little bird has whispered a secret to me.’

“ ‘ And what may that be?’ says she.

“ ‘ Only that the childer were changed, and you know it as well as I do.’ But she swore that she knew nothing about it, and that she was not there when either of the children was born, and I believe that she told the truth. ‘ Well,’ says I, ‘ who tended the lady?’

“ ‘ My own mother,’ says Ella. ‘ And if it was so, who can know but she?’

“ ‘ Then,’ says I, ‘ Ella, jewel, I’ve made a vow that I’ll never marry, till I find out the truth of this matter; so the sooner you get it out of your mother the better.’ Then she cried very much, and I was almost ready to cry too, to see how the poor thing was vexed at the idea of not being married. After a while, she swabbed up her cheeks, and kissing me, wished me good-bye, swearing by all the saints that the truth should come out somehow or another.

“ It’s this morning that I saw her again, as agreed upon yesterday, and red her eyes were with weeping poor thing; and she clung to

me, and begged me to forgive her, and not to leave her; and then she told me that her mother was startled when she put the question to her, and chewed it, and cursed her when she insisted upon the truth; and how she had fallen on her knees, and begged her mother not to stand in the way of her happiness, as she would die if she did, (I leave you to guess if my heart didn't smite me when she said that, Peter, but the mischief was done,) and how her mother had talked about her oath and Father O'Toole, and said that she would speak to him.

"Now, Peter, I'm sure that the childer have been changed, and that the nurse has been sent to the Indies to be out of the way. They say they were to go to Plymouth. The husband's name is of course, O'Sullivan; so I'd recommend you to take a coach and see what you can do in that quarter; in the meantime, I'll try all I can for the truth in this, and will write again as soon as I can find out anything more. All I want to do is to get Father M'Grath to go to the old devil of a mother, and I'll answer for it, he'll frighten her into swearing anything. God bless you, Peter, and give my love to all the family.

"Yours ever,

"TERENCE O'BRIEN."

This letter of O'Brien was the subject of much meditation. The advice to go to Plymouth was too late, the troops having sailed some time, and I had no doubt but that Mary Sullivan and her husband were among those who had embarked at the time that I was at that port to pass my examination. Show the letter to my father I would not, as it would only have put him in a fever, and his interference would, in all probability, have done more harm than good. I therefore waited quietly for more intelligence, and resolved to apply to my grandfather to obtain my promotion.

A few days afterwards I set off for Eagle Park, and arrived about eleven o'clock in the morning. I sent in my name, and was admitted into the library, where I found Lord Privilege in his easy chair as usual.

"Well, child," said he, remaining on his chair, and not offering even *one* finger to me, "what do you want, that you come here without an invitation?"

"Only, my lord, to inquire after your health, and to thank you for your kindness to me in procuring me and Mr. O'Brien the appointment to a fine frigate."

"Yes," replied his lordship, "I recollect—

I think I did so, at your request, and I think I heard some one say that you have behaved well, and had been mentioned in the despatches."

"Yes, my lord," replied I, "and I have since passed my examination for lieutenant."

"Well, child, I'm glad to hear it. Remember me to your father and family." And his lordship cast his eyes down upon the book which he had been reading.

My father's observations appeared to be well grounded, but I would not leave the room until I had made some further attempt.

"Has your lordship heard from my uncle?"

"Yes," replied he, "I had a letter from him yesterday. The child is quite well. I expect them all here in a fortnight or three weeks, to live with me altogether. I am old—getting very old, and I shall have much to arrange with your uncle before I die."

"If I might request a favour of your lordship, it would be to beg that you would interest yourself a little in obtaining my promotion. A letter from your lordship to the First Lord—only a few lines——"

"Well, child, I see no objection—only—I am very old, too old to write now." And his lordship again commenced reading.

I must do Lord Privilege the justice to state that he evidently was fast verging to a state of second childhood. He was much bowed down since I had last seen him, and appeared infirm in body as well as mind.

I waited at least a quarter of an hour before his lordship looked up.

“What not gone yet, child? I thought you had gone home.”

“Your lordship was kind enough to say that you had no objection to write a few lines to the First Lord in my behalf. I trust your lordship will not refuse me.”

“Well,” replied he, peevishly, “so I did—but I am too old, too old to write—I cannot see—I can hardly hold a pen.”

“Will your lordship allow me the honour of writing the letter for your lordship’s signature?”

“Well, child—yes—I’ve no objection. Write as follows—no—write anything you please—and I’ll sign it. I wish your uncle William were come.”

This was more than I did. I had a great mind to show him O’Brien’s letter, but I thought it would be cruel to raise doubts, and harass the mind of a person so close to the

brink of the grave. The truth would never be ascertained during his life, I thought; and why, therefore, should I give him pain? At all events, although I had the letter in my pocket, I resolved not to make use of it except as a *dernier* resort.

I went to another table, and sat down to write the letter. As his lordship had said that I might write what I pleased, it occurred to me that I might assist O'Brien, and I felt sure that his lordship would not take the trouble to read the letter. I therefore wrote as follows, while Lord Privilege continued to read his book.

“MY LORD—You will confer a very great favour upon me, if you will hasten the commission which, I have no doubt, is in preparation for my nephew, Mr. Simple, who has passed his examination, and has been mentioned in the public despatches; and also that you will not lose sight of Lieutenant O'Brien, who has so distinguished himself by his gallantry in the various cutting-out expeditions in the West Indies. Trusting that your lordship will not fail to comply with my earnest request, I have

the honour to be, your lordship's very obedient humble servant."

I brought this letter, with a pen full of ink, and the noise of my approach induced his lordship to look up. He stared at first, as having forgotten the whole circumstance—then said—"O yes! I recollect, so I did—give me the pen." With a trembling hand he signed his name, and gave me back the letter without reading it, as I expected.

"There, child, don't tease me any more. Good-bye; remember me to your father."

I wished his lordship a good morning, and went away well satisfied with the result of my expedition. On my arrival I showed the letter to my father, who was much surprised at my success, and he assured me that my grandfather's interest was so great with the administration, that I might consider my promotion as certain. That no accident might happen, I immediately set off for London, and delivered the letter at the door of the First Lord with my own hands, leaving my address with the porter.

CHAPTER XX.

O'Brien and myself take a step each, *pari passu*—A family reunion, productive of anything but unity—My uncle, not always the best friend.

A FEW days afterwards I left my card with my address with the First Lord, and the next day received a letter from his secretary, which, to my delight, informed me that my commission had been made out some days before. I hardly need say that I hastened to take it up, and when paying my fee to the clerk, I ventured, at a hazard, to inquire whether he knew the address of Lieutenant O'Brien.

"No," replied he, "I wish to find it out, for he has this day been promoted to the rank of Commander."

I almost leaped with joy when I heard this good news. I gave O'Brien's address to the

clerk, hastened away with my invaluable piece of parchment in my hand, and set off immediately for my father's house.

But I was met with sorrow. My mother had been taken severely ill, and I found the house in commotion—doctors, and apothecaries, and nurses, running to and fro, my father in a state of excitement, and my dear sister in tears. Spasm succeeded spasm, and although every remedy was applied, the next evening she breathed her last. I will not attempt to describe the grief of my father, who appeared to feel remorse at his late unkind treatment of her, my sister, and myself. These scenes must be imagined by those who have suffered under similar bereavements. I exerted myself to console my poor sister, who appeared to cling to me as to her only support, and, after the funeral was over, we recovered our tranquillity, although the mourning was still deeper in our hearts than in our outward dress. I had written to O'Brien to announce the mournful intelligence, and, like a true friend, he immediately made his appearance to console me.

O'Brien had received the letter from the Admiralty, acquainting him with his promotion ; and, two days after he arrived, went to take up

his commission. I told him frankly by what means he had obtained it, and he again concluded his thanks by a reference to the mistake of the former supposition, that of my being "the fool of the family."

"By the powers, it would be well for any man if he had a few of such foolish friends about him," continued he; "but I won't blarney you, Peter; you know what my opinion always has been, so we'll say no more about it."

When he came back, we had a long consultation as to the best method of proceeding to obtain employment, for O'Brien was anxious to be again afloat, and so was I. I regretted parting with my sister, but my father was so morose and ill-tempered, that I had no pleasure at home, except in her company. Indeed, my sister was of opinion, that it would be better if I were away, as my father's misanthropy, now unchecked by my mother, appeared to have increased, and he seemed to view me with positive dislike. It was, therefore, agreed unanimously between my sister, and me, and O'Brien, who was always of our councils, that it would be advisable that I should be again afloat.

"I can manage him much better when alone,

Peter; I shall have nothing to occupy me and take me away from him, as your presence does now; and, painful as it is to part with you, my duty to my father, and my wish for your advancement, induce me to request that you will, if possible, find some means of obtaining employment."

"Spoken like a hero, as ye are, Miss Ellen, notwithstanding your pretty face and soft eyes," said O'Brien. "And now, Peter, for the means to bring it about. If I can get a ship, there is no fear for you, as I shall choose you for my lieutenant; but how is that to be managed? Do you think that you can come over the old gentleman at Eagle Park?"

"At all events I'll try," replied I; "I can but be floored, O'Brien."

Accordingly, the next day I set off for my grandfather's, and was put down at the lodge, at the usual hour, about eleven o'clock. I walked up the avenue and knocked at the door; when it was opened, I perceived a hesitation among the servants, and a constrained air which I did not like. I inquired after Lord Privilege—the answer was, that he was pretty well, but did not see *any* body.

"Is my uncle here?" said I.

“ Yes, sir,” replied the servant, with a significant look, “ and all his family are here too.”

“ Are you sure that I cannot see my *grandfather*,” said I, laying a stress upon the word.

“ I will tell him that your are here, sir,” replied the man, “ but even that is against orders.”

I had never seen my uncle since I was a child, and could not even recollect him—my cousins, or my aunt, I had never met with. In a minute, an answer was brought, requesting that I would walk into the library. When I was ushered in, I found myself in the presence of Lord Privilege, who sat in his usual place, and a tall gentleman, whom I knew at once to be my uncle, from his likeness to my father.

“ Here is the young gentleman, my lord,” said my uncle, looking at me sternly.

“ Heh ! what—oh ! I recollect. Well, child, so you’ve been behaving very ill—sorry to hear it. Good-bye.”

“ Behaving ill, my lord !” replied I. “ I am not aware of having so done.”

“ Reports are certainly very much against you, nephew,” observed my uncle, drily. “ Some one has told your grandfather what has much

displeased him. I know nothing about it myself."

"Then some rascal has slandered me, sir," replied I.

My uncle started at the word rascal; and then recovering himself, replied, "Well, nephew, what is it that you require of Lord Privilege, for I presume this visit is not without a cause?"

"Sir," replied I, "my visit to Lord Privilege was, first to thank him for having procured me my commission as lieutenant, and to request the favour that he would obtain me active employment, which a line from him will effect immediately."

"I was not aware, nephew, that you had been made lieutenant; but I agree with you, that the more you are at sea the better. His lordship shall sign the letter. Sit down."

"Shall I write it, sir?" said I to my uncle; "I know what to say."

"Yes; and bring it to me when it is written."

I felt convinced that the only reason which induced my uncle to obtain me employment, was the idea that I should be better out of the

way, and that there was more risk at sea than on shore. I took a sheet of paper, and wrote as follows:—

“MY LORD—May I request that your lordship will be pleased to appoint the bearer of this to a ship, as soon as convenient, as I wish him to be actively employed.

“I am, my lord, &c. &c.”

“Why not mention your name?”

“It is of no consequence,” replied I, “as it will be delivered in person, and that will ensure my speedy appointment.”

The letter was placed before his lordship for signature. It was with some difficulty that he was made to understand that he was to sign it. The old gentleman appeared much more imbecile than when I last saw him. I thanked him, folded up the letter, and put it in my pocket. At last, he looked at me, and a sudden flash of recollection appeared to come across his mind.

“Well, child—so you escaped from the French prison—heh! and how’s your friend; what is his name, beh?”

“O’Brien, my lord.”

“O’Brien!” cried my uncle, “he is *your* friend; then, sir, I presume it is to you that I am indebted for all the inquiries and reports which were so industriously circulated in Ireland—the tampering with my servants—and other impertinences?”

I did not choose to deny the truth, although I was a little fluttered by the sudden manner in which it came to light. I replied, “I never tamper with any people’s servants, sir.”

“No,” said he, “but you employ others so to do. I discovered the whole of your proceedings, after the scoundrel left for England.”

“If you apply the word scoundrel to Captain O’Brien, sir, in his name I contradict it.”

“As you please, sir,” replied my uncle, in a passion, “but you will oblige me by quitting this house immediately, and expect nothing more, either from the present or the future Lord Privilege, except that retaliation which your infamous conduct has deserved.”

I felt much irritated, and replied very sharply, “From the present Lord Privilege I certainly expect nothing more, neither do I from his successor; but after your death, uncle, I expect

that the person who succeeds to the title will do all he can for your humble servant. I wish you a good morning, uncle."

My uncle's eyes flashed fire as I finished my speech, which indeed was a very bold, and a very foolish one too, as it afterwards proved. I hastened out of the room, not only from the fear of being turned out of the house before all the servants, but also from the dread that my letter to the First Lord might be taken from me by force; but I never shall forget the scowl of vengeance which crossed my uncle's brows, as I turned round and looked at him as I shut the door. I found my way out without the assistance of the servants, and hastened home as fast as I could.

"O'Brien," said I, on my return, "there is no time to be lost; the sooner you hasten to town with this letter of introduction, the better it will be, for depend upon it my uncle will do me all the harm that he can." I then repeated to him all that had passed, and it was agreed, that O'Brien should take the letter, which having reference to the bearer, would do as well for him as for me; and, if O'Brien obtained an appointment, I was sure not only of being one of his lieutenants, but also of sailing with a dear

friend. The next morning, O'Brien set off for London, and fortunately saw the First Lord the day after his arrival, which was a levee day. The First Lord received the letter from O'Brien, and requested him to sit down. He then read it, inquired after his lordship, asked whether his health was good, &c.

O'Brien replied, "that with the blessing of God, his lordship might live many years: that he had never heard him complain of ill health." All which was not false, if not true. I could not help observing to O'Brien, when he returned home and told me what had passed, "That I thought, considering what he had expressed with respect to white lies and black lies, that he had not latterly adhered to his own creed."

"That's very true, Peter; and I've thought of it myself, but it is my creed nevertheless. We all know what's right, but we don't always follow it. The fact is, I begin to think that it is absolutely necessary to fight the world with its own weapons. I spoke to Father M'Grath on the subject, and he replied, 'That if any one, by doing wrong, necessitated another to do wrong to circumvent him, that the first party was answerable, not only for his own sin, but also for the sin committed in self-defence.'"

“But, O’Brien, I do not fix my faith so implicitly upon Father M’Grath; and I do not much admire many of his directions.”

“No more do I, Peter, when I think upon them; but how am I to puzzle my head upon these points? All I know is, that when you are divided between your inclination and your duty, it’s mighty convenient to have a priest like Father M’Grath to decide for you, and to look after your soul into the bargain.”

It occurred to me, that I myself, when finding fault with O’Brien, had, in the instance of both the letters from Lord Privilege, been also guilty of deccit. I was therefore blaming him for the same fault committed by myself; and I am afraid that I was too ready in consoling myself with Father M’Grath’s maxim, ‘That one might do evil, that good might come.’ But to return to O’Brien’s interview.

After some little conversation, the First Lord said, “Captain O’Brien, I am always very ready to oblige Lord Privilege, and the more so as his recommendation is of an officer of your merit. In a day or two, if you will call at the Admiralty, you will hear further.” O’Brien wrote to us immediately, and we waited with impatience for his next letter; but instead of

the letter, he made his appearance on the third day, and first hugging me in his arms, he then came to my sister, embraced her, and skipped and danced about the room.

“What is the matter, O’Brien?” said I, while Ellen retreated in confusion.

O’Brien pulled a parchment out of his pocket. “Here, Peter, my dear Peter; now for honour and glory. An eighteen-gun brig, Peter. The Rattlesnake—Captain O’Brien—West India station. By the holy father! my heart’s bursting with joy!” and down he sank into an easy chair. “An’t I almost beside myself?” inquired he, after a short pause.

“Ellen thinks so, I dare say,” replied I, looking at my sister, who stood in the corner of the room, thinking O’Brien was really out of his senses, and still red with confusion.

O’Brien, who then called to mind what a slip of decorum he had been guilty of, immediately rose, and resuming his usual unsophisticated politeness, as he walked up to my sister, took her hand and said, “Excuse me, my dear Miss Ellen; I must apologize for my rudeness; but my delight was so great, and my gratitude to your brother so intense, that I am afraid that in my warmth, I allowed the expression of my

feelings to extend to one so dear to him, and so like him in person and in mind. Will you only consider that you received the overflowings of a grateful heart towards your brother, and for his sake pardon my indiscretion?"

Ellen smiled, and held out her hand to O'Brien, who led her to the sofa, where we all three sat down: and O'Brien commenced a more intelligible narrative of what had passed. He had called on the day appointed, and sent up his card. The First Lord could not see him, but referred him to the private secretary, who presented him with his commission to the Rattlesnake, eighteen-gun brig. The secretary smiled most graciously, and told O'Brien in confidence, that he would proceed to the West India station as soon as his vessel was manned and ready for sea. He inquired of O'Brien whom he wished as his first lieutenant. O'Brien replied that he wished for me, but as, in all probability, I should not be of sufficient standing to be first lieutenant, that the Admiralty might appoint any other to the duty, provided I joined the ship. The secretary made a minute of O'Brien's wish, and requested him, if he had a vacancy to spare as midshipman, to allow him to send one on board; to which

O'Brien willingly acceded, shook hands with him, and O'Brien quitted the Admiralty to hasten down to us with the pleasing intelligence.

“And now,” said O'Brien, “I have made up my mind how to proceed. I shall first run down to Plymouth and hoist my pennant; then I shall ask for a fortnight's leave and go to Ireland to see how they get on, and what Father M'Grath may be about. So, Peter, let's pass this evening as happily as we can: for though you and I shall soon meet again, yet it may be years, or perhaps never, that we three shall sit down on the same sofa as we do now.”

Ellen, who was still nervous from the late death of my mother, looked down, and I perceived the tears start in her eyes at the remark of O'Brien, that perhaps we should never meet again. And I did pass a happy evening; my father dined out, and did not interrupt us. I had a dear sister on one side of me, and a sincere friend on the other. How few situations more enviable!

O'Brien left us early the next morning; and, at breakfast time, a letter was handed to my father. It was from my uncle, coldly communi-

cating to him that Lord Privilege had died the night before very suddenly, and informing him that the burial would take place on that day week, and that the will would be opened immediately after the funeral. My father handed the letter over to me without saying a word, and sipped his tea with his tea-spoon. I cannot say that I felt very much on the occasion; but I did feel, because he had been kind to me at one time: as for my father's feelings, I could not—or rather I should say, I did not wish to analyze them. As soon as he had finished his cup of tea, he left the breakfast-table, and went into his study. I then communicated the intelligence to my sister Ellen.

“My God!” said she, after a pause, putting her hand up to her eyes, “what a strange, unnatural state of society must we have arrived at, when my father can thus receive the intelligence of a parent's death! Is it not dreadful?”

“It is, my dearest girl,” replied I; “but every feeling has been sacrificed to worldly considerations and an empty name. The younger sons have been neglected, if not deserted. Virtue, talent, everything set at naught—intrinsic value despised—and the only claim to consideration admitted, that of being the heir entail.

When all the ties of nature are cast loose by the parents, can you be surprised if the children are no longer bound by them? Most truly do you observe, that it is a detestable state of society."

"I did not say detestable, brother; I said strange and unnatural."

"Had you said what I said, Ellen, you would not have been wrong. I would not, for the title and wealth which it brings, be the heartless, isolated—I may say neglected being that my grandfather was: were it offered now, I would not barter for it Ellen's love."

Ellen threw herself in my arms; we then walked into the garden, where we had a long conversation relative to our future wishes, hopes, and prospects.

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